

# little village

iowa city's news & culture magazine

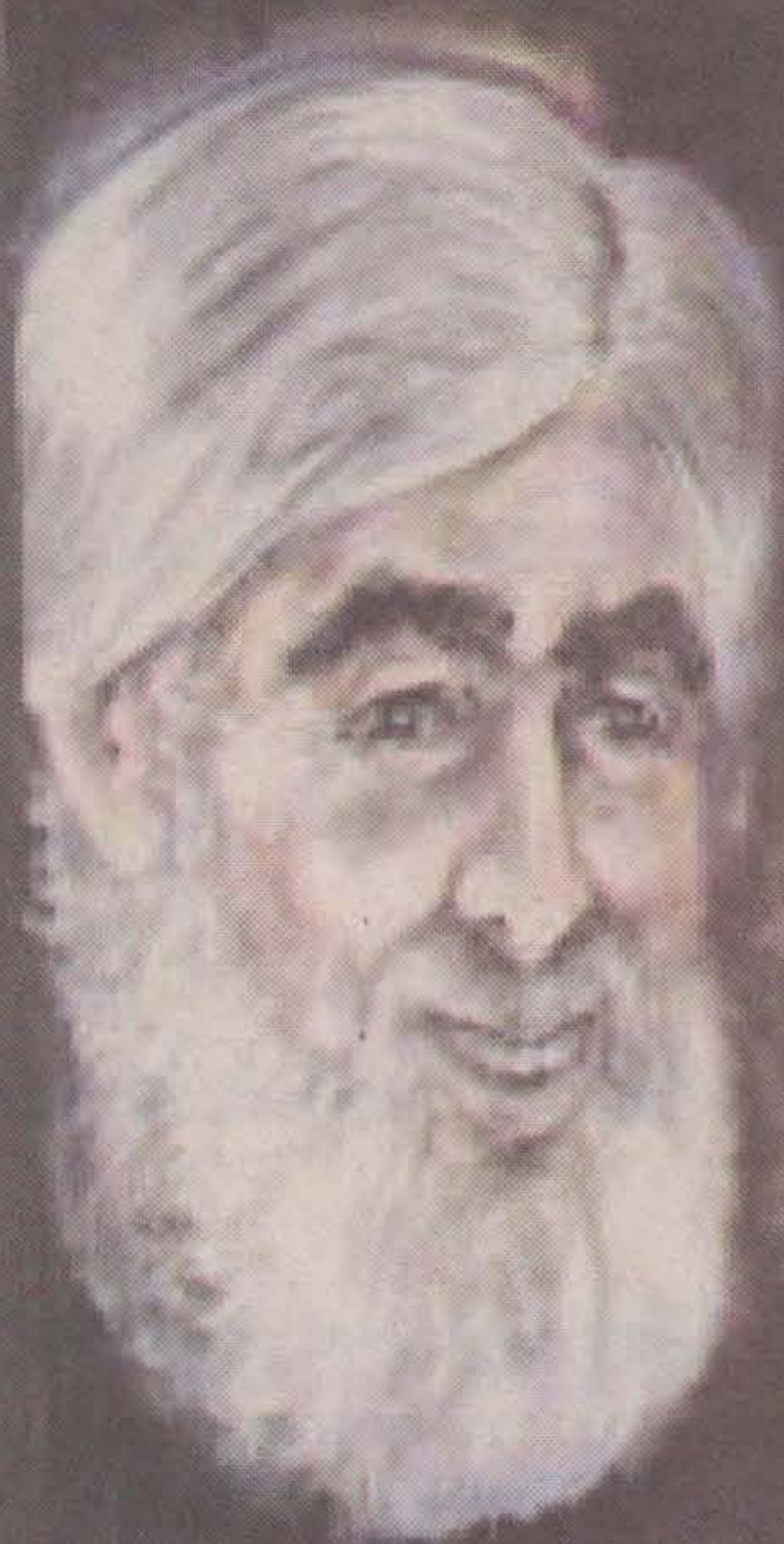
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8.04

UPTOWN BILL'S SMALL MALL

Uptown Bill's  
SMALL MALL

WELCOME



page

Iowa City folk hero Bill Sackter died 21 years ago, but his spirit lives on in a little place on Gilbert Street where the people are as good as the coffee — and just getting started

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August  
is...  
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The  
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White North  
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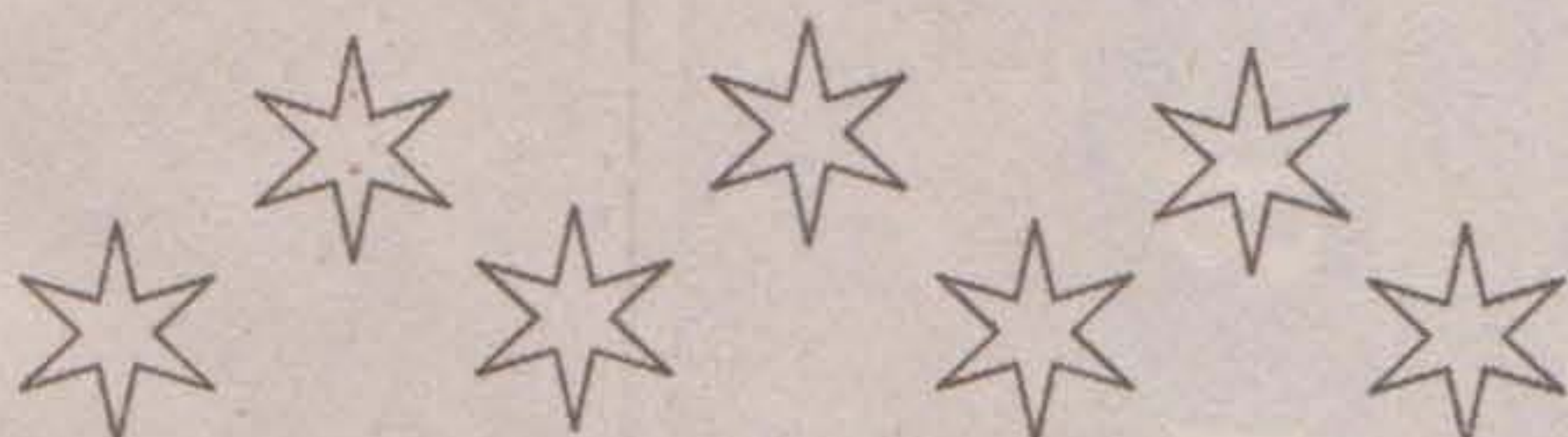
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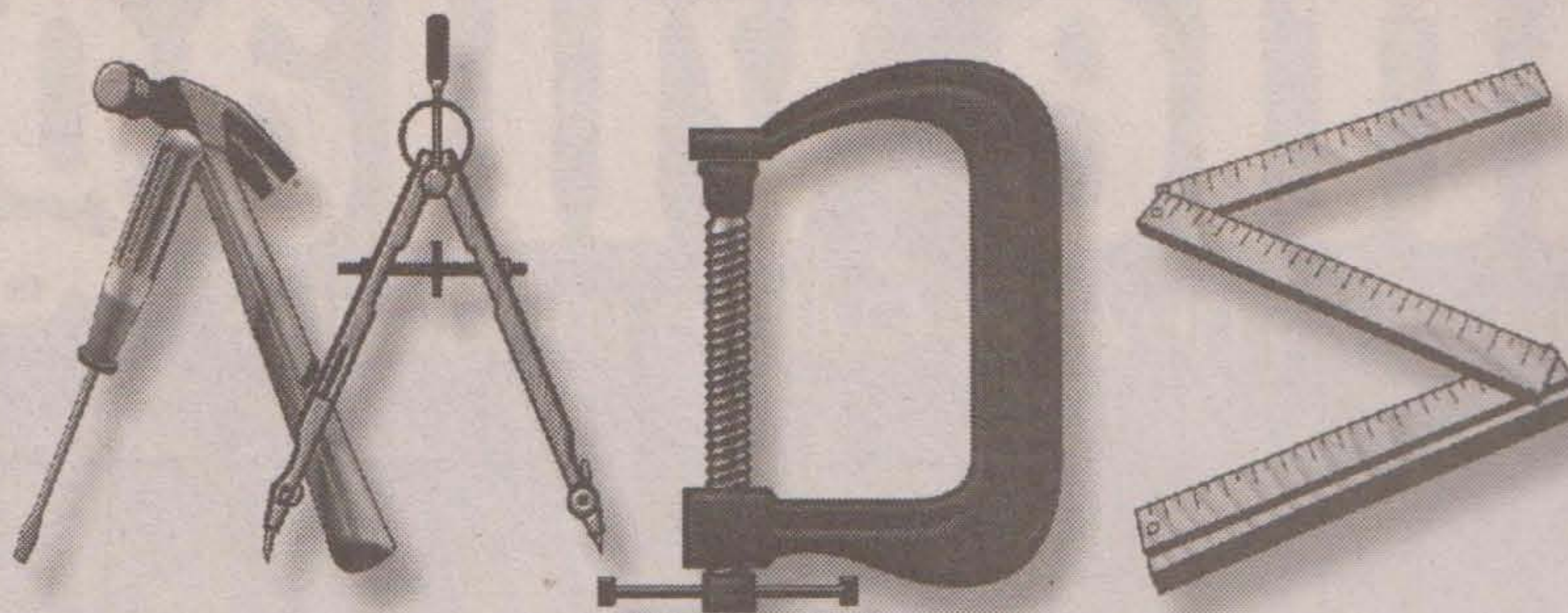
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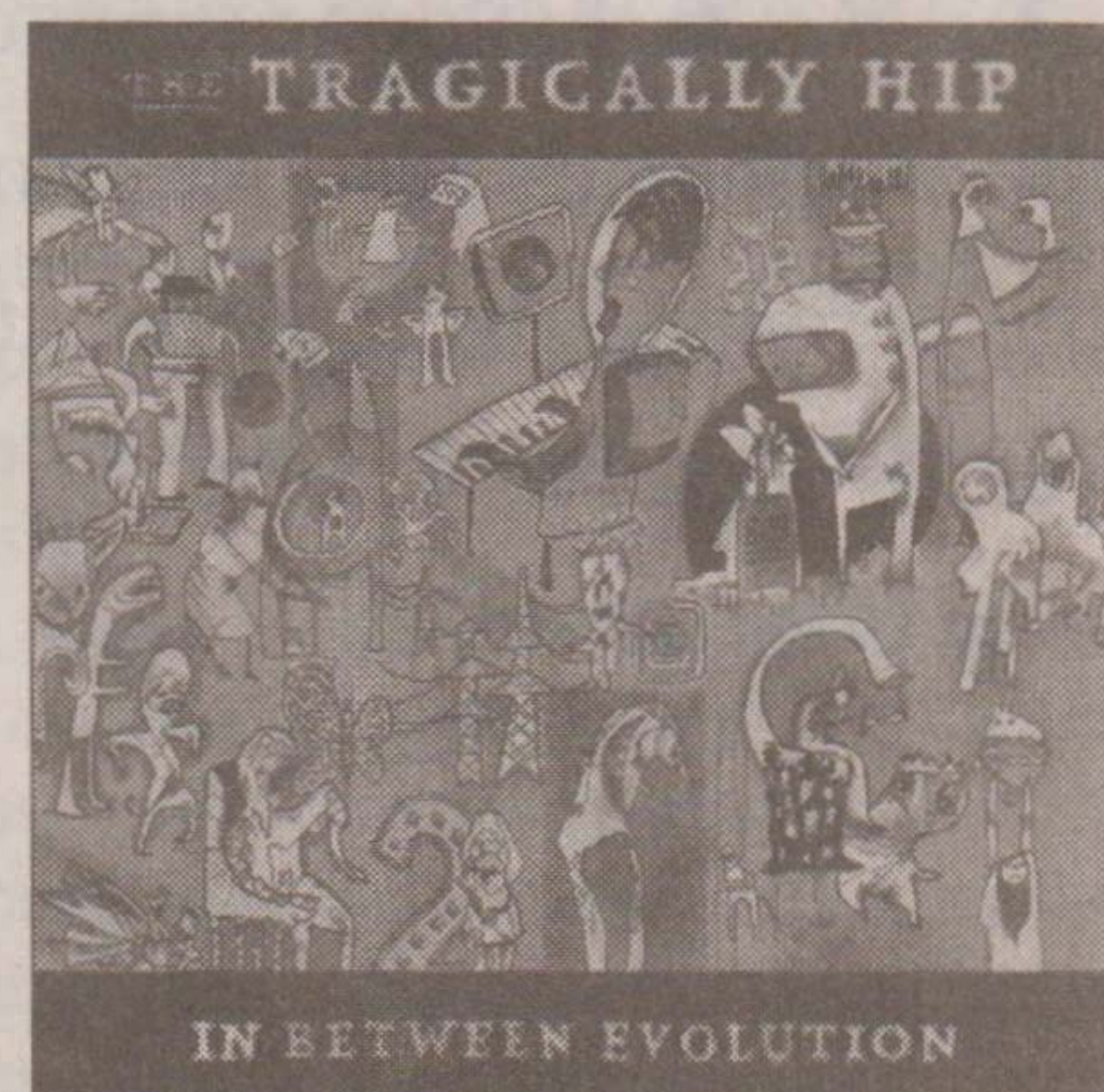
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# little village

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free!

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# THIS MODERN WORLD

## by TOM TOMORROW

## OUR STORY SO FAR

THE PRESIDENT WARNS OF AN  
IMENDING THREAT.

WE HAVE **PROOF** THAT SADDAM IS  
CREATING AN ARMY OF **GIANT**  
**MUTANT LIZARDS** THAT SHOOT  
**LASER BEAMS** OUT OF THEIR  
**EYEBALLS!**

WE CAN'T WAIT  
FOR THE SMOK-  
ING GUN TO  
COME IN THE  
FORM OF A  
BUNCH OF  
GIANT LIZARDS!

MEMBERS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION  
PUT THEIR OWN CREDIBILITY ON  
THE LINE.

NOT ONLY DOES HE HAVE THE  
**LIZARDS**--HE ALSO HAS THE  
CAPABILITY AND INTENT TO MAN-  
UFACTURE **UNSTOPPABLE**  
**KILLER ROBOTS!**

THE PUBLIC GROWS INCREASINGLY FRANTIC.

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH DAMAGE AN ARMY OF MUTANT LIZARDS CAN DO WITH THEIR LASER-SHOOTING EYEBALLS?

**ESPECIALLY IF THEY'RE  
BACKED UP BY UNSTOP-  
PABLE KILLER ROBOTS!**

THE INEVITABLE WAR ENSUES. VICTORY IS QUICKLY DECLARED.

WE HAVE **LIBERATED** THE GRATEFUL, ROSE-PETAL-TOSSING POPULACE OF IRAQ FROM THEIR LIZARD-CREATING OVERLORD!

WE EXPECT TO FIND  
THE LIZARDS ANY  
DAY NOW.

A YEAR LATER, PEOPLE ARE STILL DYING.

EVENTUALLY, IT BECOMES POLITICALLY  
PALATABLE FOR DEMOCRATS TO  
ACKNOWLEDGE THE OBVIOUS.

WHY--THERE WAS NEVER ANY  
REAL EVIDENCE OF GIANT LIZARDS--  
OR KILLER ROBOTS!

HAD WE BUT KNOWN THE TRUTH, WE SURELY WOULD NOT HAVE VOTED FOR THIS NOW-UNPOPULAR WAR!

REPUBLICANS, MEANWHILE, CONTINUE TO CLUTCH AT STRAWS.

IT SAYS HERE THAT THERE ARE  
MANY SPECIES OF LIZARDS IN IRAQ--  
AND SOME OF THEM GROW FAIRLY  
LARGE!

**BIG LIZARDS, EH? WELL THEN--THE ENTIRE WAR WAS TOTALLY JUSTIFIED! WE WERE RIGHT AND THE LEFTIES WERE WRONG! THEY SHOULD GET ON THEIR KNEES AND APOLOGIZE PROFUSELY!** BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH



# Fish Nuggets: lazy, crazy, hazy days indeed

**M**idsummer is often referred to as “silly season” in politics, particularly in election years, a time when, in absence of any real developments, speculations run rampant and trial balloons threaten to obscure the sun. This summer is certainly no exception. Though the Democratic National Convention will doubtless liven things up a bit by the time you read this, the perennial national debate on heat versus humidity is still taking precedence over that of Bush versus Kerry as I write. Still, an intrepid political junkie is never at a loss for long, and silly is as silly does, to wit...

**N**EW VISTAS IN SLOGANEERING: Rare props to Vice President Dick Cheney for summing up in two choice words what his administration stands for in a way that had previously eluded a team of PR flacks and bumper sticker merchants. And fuck you, too, Mr. Vice President. Glad you feel better.

**B U S H , STUMPED:** We residents of the Midwest’s “battle ground” states have been the lucky recipients of much presidential attention of late, with the president taking time out from his traditional months long Crawford, Texas,

vacation to campaign extensively across the region. This has given us a remarkable opportunity to witness firsthand the evolution of the campaign strategies that the president hopes to parlay into what he

hopes will be an actual legitimate election this time around.

One element of the president’s stump speech in particular caught my attention. In what might have been a brilliant summation of his campaign’s contentions that his Democratic rivals are both short on political consistency and weak on defense, the president, speaking in Duluth, Minn., on July 13, took his opponents to task for voting in favor of the Iraq war and against an \$87 million resolution to fund it. “Members of Congress,” he said, “should not vote to send American troops into battle and then vote against funding them.”

I say that this might have been brilliant in my firm belief that a thing cannot be both brilliant and total bullshit at the same time. Neither Senator Kerry nor Senator Edwards, nor indeed any other member of Congress, voted to “send American troops into battle.” Instead, they voted to grant the president the authority to do so, on the understanding, carefully cultivated by the administration previous to the vote, that he would do so responsibly, with the cooperation of the international community, and, most

importantly, as a last resort to the diplomatic efforts he assured them were ongoing. Instead, he chose to rush into war with a token coalition (composed of such international heavyweights as Honduras, Vanuatu and the Republic of Togo) on the flimsiest of pretexts.

As to the \$87 billion funding initiative, the mere need for raising it stands as a stark testament to a war effort that was poorly planned and based on pie in the sky assumptions. It occurred months after US troops were already engaged, despite administration assurances that the war effort would largely be funded by Iraqi oil profits, and worst of all with no real accounting of how the administration intended to spend it. By not offering a blank check to the administration, Edwards and Kerry, and the rest of the dissenters to this boondoggle, were behaving as responsible senators in exercise of their oversight functions under the Constitution. Shame on the president for implying they should have done otherwise.

**HOME TOWN BOY MAKES GOOD SUGGESTION:** Kudos to former Iowa City walking landmark and





one-time Coralville city council candidate Nuclear Nick Bortell, both for his recent entry into the blogosphere ([www.livejournal.com/~n\\_nick](http://www.livejournal.com/~n_nick)) and for a recent entry in which he presents what might be the only plausible argument I've ever seen to convince Bush supporters to vote Kerry/Edwards this fall. His secret weapon? The one thing conservative Republicans fear more than gay marriage and higher taxes combined—the specter of President Hillary Rodham Clinton. “Raise that specter in discussion,” he says, “and observe the chill of fear in the eyes of the Shrub supporter.”

It works like this—If the Bush/Cheney ticket wins in November, four more years in office are unlikely to alter the vice president's chronic ill health and charisma deficit, meaning he is unlikely to take the vice presidential prerogative of becoming the president's successor in '08. With no other obvious successor to Bush, the Republicans will be forced to engage in a messy and divisive primary battle to name their nominee. Senator Clinton, meanwhile, would likely take the Democratic nomination in a walk away, leaving America open to four if not eight years of what every good Republican knows would be an orgy of tree hugging, Satanism, and God knows what else. A vote for Bush in '04 is a vote for Hillary in '08.

Sure it's bullshit. That's part of its brilliance. One need look no further than Fox News or the Limbaugh show to realize that bullshit is in fact a staple of the Republican political diet. I suggest strongly that we all invite our Republican friends, family and neighbors to feast on this particular meal as soon as possible. Bravo again, Mr. Bortell... **LV**

## Here, August Is...

**H**ere, August is fullness. Our backyard tomato plants overflow with red, juicy abundance. The zucchini multiply out of control; neighbors and coworkers avoid looking at us when we approach with an armload to share. The farmer's market tables seem to be sprouting their own green largesse, there is so much harvest. Tables and trucks full of Muscatine melons pop up on street corners. Corn and soybean fields seem to be sinking under their own rich greenness.

Here, August is emptiness. Stores' garden centers display wilting leftovers, ever-shrinking piles of bags of topsoil, mulch and composted manure. Retail shelves are cleared of swimming pool accessories, red-white-and-blue flags and picnic supplies. Should we plant fall spinach in that garden spot bare of thick, leafy green since early summer?

Here, August is thickness. Summer's humidity plops in lassitude over our Midwest, the saturated air almost dank. We worry it will never leave. We tire and slow as we slog through the oppressive mustiness. The swimming pool's water seems almost too slow, too. Did someone put a little bit of gelatin in there?



Here, August is nascent thinness. The raspberry bushes, as they deliver sweet red fruit, show gaps in their branches as they start to droop toward winter's rest. The pepper plants' leaves are past their shiny vibrancy. The lawn slows its manic growth, the tiny green spikes losing their muscle tone in middle age. In our backyard prairie patch, the fat purple of beard-tongue has given way to the delicate laciness of white aster.

Here, August is crisp and sweet. Huge watermelons are jailed in big wooden bins in the middle of the air-conditioned grocery store floor, ready to be sprung to give us a little summer sparkle as we slice the thick green hide and shove dark pink sweetness into our mouths. Juice trickles down our chins as we spit the seeds. Sugary corn cobs, eager to be baptized by creamy pats of butter, burst from hairy green blankets ready to be ripped off in

squeaky splendor.

Here, August is quiet. July's firecrackers are silenced. The frog in Ralston Creek near our house has given up its nightly song. Grasshoppers in tall grass click and buzz only occasionally. Last-chance vacations create vacant homes throughout our neighborhoods. In our university town, the summer students are gone. Downtown rests.

Here, August is stale boredom. We're a little tired of the guilty-pleasure books we've been reading. We've been to Lake Macbride a hundred times already. The summer movie blockbusters are now all long in the tooth, and the theater's bill of new fare is underwhelming. Weeding the garden—again—is a dreaded chore rather than a welcome act of paternal stewardship.

Here, August is cool-tinged. Moments flit by, in early morning or late at night, when a chilled crispness breaks through the warm, sticky atmosphere. Once in a while, when I let the dogs out at night, I think maybe a light jacket would have been a good idea.

Here, August is darkening. I suddenly notice that 8 p.m. is more black than dusky. Fewer bicycles crisscross the sidewalk and street in front of our house in mid-evening. Fingers of light through the windows no longer inspire our kids' complaints that it can't be bedtime as long as there's still light.

Here, August is disappointment. The elongated prospect of endless time has turned to foreshortened days of missed opportunity. The exercise regime has dissipated. The progress on writing the new book has fallen short. The garage has not in fact, finally, this year, been cleaned.

Here, August is anticipating. We realize there is now something to pick at Wilson's Apple Orchard, a preview of September's bounty. As we travel there on Highway 1 toward Solon, we see a farmer tuning up the combine. Now and then I notice a hint of yellow on the margins of trees. As my kids and I ride our bikes through the Lucas Elementary playground and parking lots, we notice a few cars on the grounds, and a few teachers inside sprucing up classrooms. These seismic hints tell us life will change drastically in a few weeks.

Here, August is special. August is moments of revel, and moments of sloth. August is endings. August is transitions, as are all moments of life. **LV**



# From farm to kitchen to table

## and the Scattergood method of creating citizens

Imagine a school where the students take an active role in the production of their own food, from plant to plate. They till the soil, sow the seeds, pull the weeds, harvest, cook and enjoy the food. They compost the scrap. Students even feed cows, chickens and sheep—all this while receiving a first-class, college-prep education.

That's not all. In an atmosphere that emphasizes personal responsibility as well as community cooperation, these high school students clean the classrooms, the

bathrooms, the cafeteria and more. One week they are building a new classroom, the next they are sweeping the library, all right alongside the faculty, who participate in these work crews, too.

Students learn all the basics you would expect a school to teach: advanced math, English, foreign language, history, humanities, research and composition. They learn pottery, glass blowing, even (get this) fencing.

Lest you think this is some hippie commune, you should know that each student carries a notebook computer with school-wide WiFi internet access (students maintain the network, too).

Sound like a rich, East Coast private school, right? No, it's right down the road in West Branch, Iowa. Is this a new idea? Yes, if "founded in 1890" counts as new. Sound impossible? Sound like a pipe dream? It's not; it's Scattergood.

The goal of Scattergood is to prepare students for college and for life by instilling in them the recognition of self-worth, a sense of global citizenship, growing spiritual awareness, a commitment to lifelong learning, the ability to live constructively in a community, and the skills to attain future academic and vocational success. It's hard not to love a school that can do that. Of course, it is Scattergood's philosophy of food that has me waxing poetic.

Scattergood believes that all work has dignity and is intrinsically rewarding, which happens to jibe perfectly with what I've been preaching in these pages: that cooking is not a hassle to be performed grudgingly. Rather, it is a sincere act of faith and love that should be performed with a certain reverence. Students at Scattergood learn the importance of this ritual from day one.

The 80-acre farm is run with a three-pronged approach. It is a "living lab" where nearly any subject can be taught. Biology to be sure, but also math, physics, history, sexuality—name a subject, it can be taught

in the three-acre organic garden. The farm is also an economic enterprise, not only feeding the campus but also selling produce to New Pioneer Co-op and to individuals through Scattergood's own Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. All this while teaching the students useful farm skills.

Among the many positive results of this: a 100 percent (that's not a typo) college placement record. In fact, acceptance to college is a requirement for graduation.

So no one can tell me that this can't be done; I've seen it. And if it can be done in one school, it can be done in thousands. Sure, the students pay a lot to go there, but nowhere near what the fancy East Coast schools cost, and not that much more than public school when you realize that room and board are included. Americans are currently only paying about \$3,000 per student per year for a public school education. If society were willing to pony up a little more than \$3K per student per year, maybe it wouldn't have to spend \$20,000 per inmate per year. Then that better education could lead to better teachers coming out of our colleges, which leads to better education and... well, you see where I'm going.

This could and should happen nationwide, to the great benefit of us all, because it would produce happier, healthier, more productive citizens in a participatory democracy, instead of just more mindless, conspicuous consumers. **LV**



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# Uptown Bill's Small Mall

Iowa City folk hero Bill Sackter died 21 years ago, but his spirit lives on in a little place on Gilbert Street where the people are as good as the coffee—and just getting started



Story by Adam Witte,  
with Meg White

Photos by Mike Breazeale

“We’re out of veggie dogs today,” the Commodore explains, rooting around the refrigerator of Uptown Bill’s Small Mall. “Sorry.”

John Coolidge is the commander in chief of Uptown Bill’s every weekday morning from 8am until noon. A perfectionist of the first order, Coolidge describes himself as “chief director of maintenance and food preparations at the Small Mall,” but you can call him The Commodore for short. Most people do.

He takes his work extremely seriously.

“I just made the coffee, though,” he offers. “It’s really fresh.”

Somewhere in the neighborhood of middle age, John is tall and thick; his arms

and fingers have the softly pudgy quality of a toddler’s limbs. His salt-and-pepper hair is beginning to thin, and his high-forehead coupled with heavy owl-rimmed glasses and bubble cheeks strengthen the impression of his being a giant, gentle child. A mental disability makes many things difficult for John, but tidiness and efficiency are not two of them. The glass case that fronts the coffee bar is filled with a carefully arranged assortment of candy bars, instant oatmeal and bags of chips. Towers of Cup-a-Soup loom Warholian behind the register; boxes of herbal tea bags form pyramids on racks. The attention to presentation and balance is perfect; John has had his hand in this as well. There are others who help, student and community volunteers and disabled employees, and John trains them as best he can, promoting them up his self-styled hierarchy from Left-Hand Man to Left-Hand Man First Class, to Right-Hand Man and so on. A person ambitious and attentive enough could one day become a commodore in his or her own right, but John has not met that person yet—there remains only one Commodore of Uptown Bill’s.

Fueled by a staggering amount of Diet Coke, John vacuums the carpets of the café area and then steers the Hoover into the adjoining room, which houses Bill’s Bookmart. Bookmart manager, Gretchen Gentsch, waves as he passes, then returns her attention to individually wrapping the stack of a dozen or more eBay sales that she must ship out later today. Perfectly round with a soft blonde pixie haircut, bookish glasses and the voice of a Disney princess, Gentsch had been working on her Master’s in Library Science at the University of Iowa when her disability made it increasingly difficult to continue with school. She joined the Uptown Bill’s crew as manager

of the used bookstore with the best deals in town (and on the Web).

Toward the very back of the Small Mall, the Commodore gives the Tea Room’s carpet only a quick once over—it was vacuumed last night after the weekly Open Mic Night that Hatter manager Del Akkins organizes with Mud River Music Collective. Then John has to hustle back to the front café to ring up Mr. Ed for a Pepsi. Edmond Gaines operates Mr. Ed’s Super Graphics, the Small Mall’s computer enterprise, from the confines of his wheelchair—though anyone who has attempted to best him in chess knows that his frail appearance is deceptive.

More sweeping, more sales, trash collected and dumpstered, and by 9am, his caffeine breakfast betraying him, John curls his arms on the glass counter and lays down his head for a quick between-customers nap, sleep-twitching like a cat in the sun.

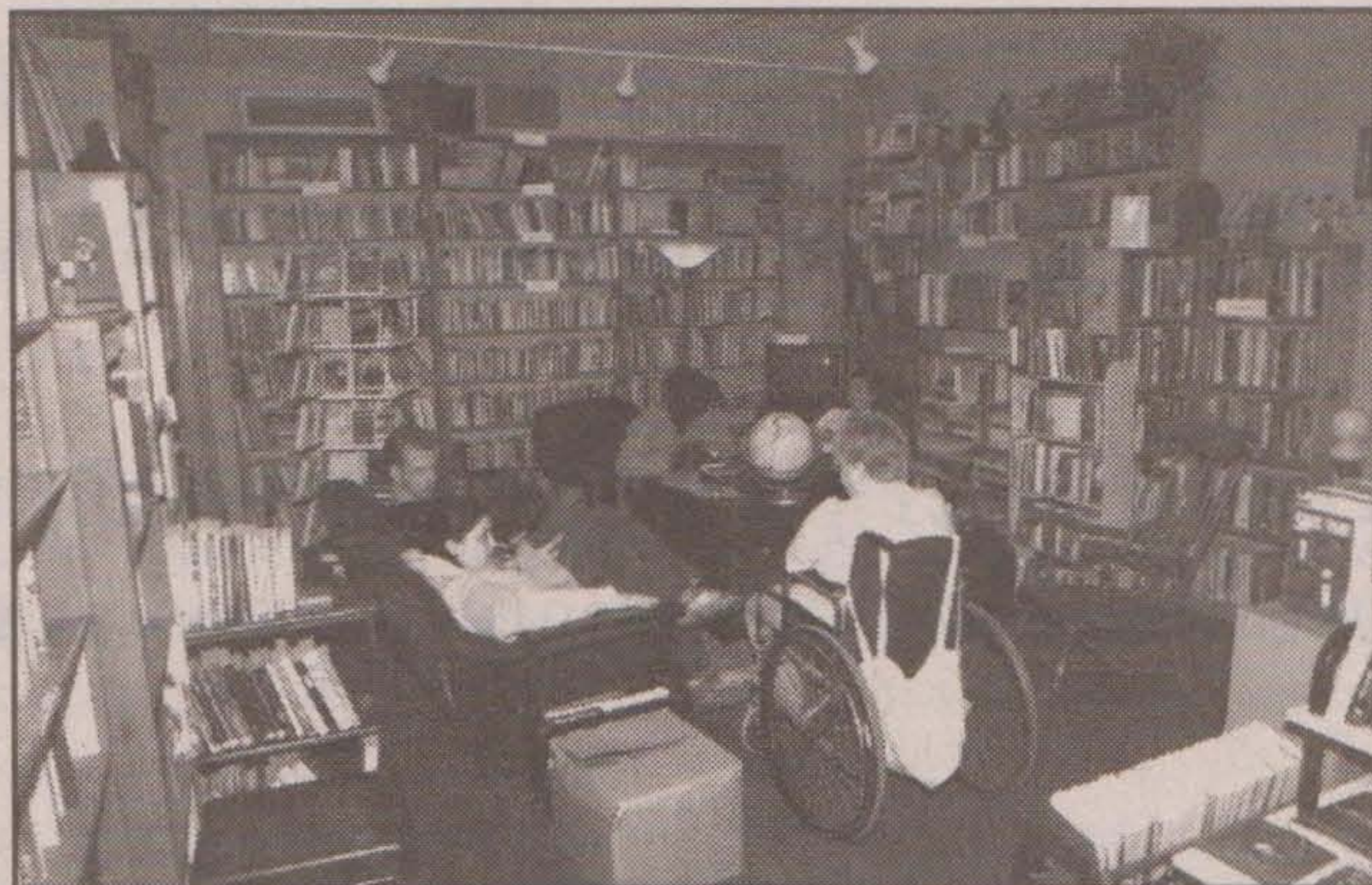
Uptown Bill’s Small Mall at 401 South Gilbert is an “incubator for small businesses,” according to Tom Walz, Professor Emeritus in the School of Social Work at the University of Iowa and head honcho of the Small Mall. Walz sees Uptown Bill’s as a place where mentally handicapped people can get some job training, where recovering addicts can get a break, and where the community can become reacquainted with those people it might prefer to ignore. His grand vision—developed over years of work and in partnership with the UI, Hollywood, Ronald McDonald and generous individuals both locally and nationally—can all be traced back to a man named Bill.

## Meet Bill Sackter

When William Sackter was born in Minneapolis to a family of Russian immigrant Jews in 1913, life was already hard. Samuel and Mary Sackter lived above



their tiny grocery store with their three children, and everyone worked hard to make ends meet. After suffering his third bout of the Spanish flu in 1920, Samuel Sackter died, and Mary turned to the State of Minnesota for financial and social support for her family. The state awarded her a small “mother’s pension,”



**Tom Walz sees Uptown Bill’s as a place where mentally handicapped people can get some job training, where recovering addicts can get a break, and where the community can become reacquainted with those people it might prefer to ignore.**

but Bill was removed from the Sackter home and placed in the Faribault School for Feeble-Minded and Epileptics (originally called the “Faribault School for Idiots and Imbeciles” under the direction of the Minnesota State Institute for Defectives). Mary Sackter, an immigrant single-mother with little education, tried to work for Bill’s release but was told in 1924 that her son was “hopeless” and destined for life-long custodial care. She moved to live with a sister in Detroit and never saw her son again. Bill received only two family visits during his life at Faribault: once by his mother just before her move, and once in the 1940s by an aunt there to visit another institutionalized relative.

One night, early in his stay at Faribault, Bill was awakened by his roommate Harold in the throes of a seizure. Bill hurried down the hall to shake the guard from his drunken stupor. When the guard came to, he beat and kicked Bill so severely for having roused him that a strip of scalp was torn from Bill’s head. He would never be able to grow hair there again. A wound to his leg never healed properly and ulcerated for the rest of his life.

Though ostensibly a “school,” Faribault worked only so hard to “educate” its charges. When Bill reached 14, administrators decided that, with his IQ of 47, further education would be worthless. He was shifted to the “work detail.” Bill worked many

menial jobs but was best at caring for the other patients. His concern for others had not been beaten from him by a drunken guard, and Bill fed, clothed, washed and talked to others in need until his release in 1964 at the age of 51.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, a reaction against institutionalization led to the community mental health movement, endorsed by the Kennedy administration. Thousands of patients in institutions were re-evaluated and released to community centers promised by the Kennedy initiative but unfunded by a contrary Congress. Thousands of mentally challenged individuals lived in halfway houses without care or counseling, and thousands more ended up homeless.

After his release, Bill Sackter lived in a halfway house for a few years but could do little to support himself, having received no marketable job training at Faribault. Eventually, he was given a job at the Minikahda Club, a Minneapolis country club. Bill worked the graveyard shift in the kitchen, drinking the dregs of the dinner buffet’s 20-gallon coffee urns to stay awake, cleaning and preparing for the morning meal, then sleeping in a small room above the kitchen during the day. It was there that he befriended Beverly Morrow, a waitress at the club. Touched by his kindness and need, she shared Bill’s story with her husband Barry. Though Barry had been a theater major, he had worked extensive-

ly with a “Life Learning Credit” program at the University of Minnesota. The program, founded in the early ’60s by radical young professor Tom Walz, allowed college students to earn credit for working with people in need in the Minneapolis community. That experience had made the Morrrows sensitive to the needs of mentally challenged individuals, and after spending more time with Bill—even bringing him onstage to play harmonica with Barry and his friend Jack Doepke’s band—the couple applied to become his legal guardians. The state granted their request and Bill moved in with the Morrrows and their young son Clay. When his old professor Walz offered Barry a position at the University of Iowa, he accepted with one condition: Bill would need a job as well.

## Meet Tom Walz

In his 72 years, there have been very few things at which Tom Walz has not succeeded—but he has been a monumental failure at retirement.

After growing up in a family of eight children in rural Minnesota, after serving in Germany during the Korean War, after earning a doctorate in Social Work, after spending years as the director of the United States Peace Corps in Honduras during the early ’60s, after teaching at the University of Minnesota, after directing the UI’s School of Social Work for many years, after working at the UI hospitals for many more, after publishing books and scholarly articles and poetry, Tom Walz “retired” four years ago.

And he blew it.

Three years ago, Walz opened Uptown Bill’s Small Mall, and he estimates that he puts in 17-hour days between the Mall, writing, teaching the occasional course on writing or Gandhian principles of non-violence, and his woodworking business.

Though his thinning hair and perfectly manicured beard are snowy white, it seems impossible that Walz was born during the Hoover administration. His eyes sharp and magnified by bifocals into huge orbs of surprise, his hands made callused and powerful by years with lathe and saw and polish, his stick legs only showing the edge of fatigue when he climbs the stairs for the umpteenth time today. His wit is sharp and he is quick to laugh, usually at himself.

“I can’t do it.” Walz shakes his head in befuddled disdain. “I can’t play golf for the rest of my life. I like working with crazy



**“I can’t do it.” Tom Walz shakes his head in befuddled disdain. “I can’t play golf for the rest of my life. I like working with crazy and retarded people.”**

and retarded people.” He chuckles. Walz has little time for the politically correct label du jour—his focus is on the work, not the image. He has no patience for the likes of the former university president who attended Bill Sackter’s funeral but would not cross the street for the reception afterward; for the administration who paid lip-service to Bill’s legacy but vehemently opposed rechristening North Hall as Sackter Hall; for folks who know how to talk *about* the disabled but never talk *to* them.

Walz has never had much patience for conventional wisdom or rules. When Barry Morrow arrived with Bill in 1974, there was no place in the School of Social Work’s budget to care for a mentally retarded man. Instead, Walz hired the “consultant” William Sackter at a modest salary.

“I filled out the paperwork, emphasizing his 44 years of ‘experience’ in the field of institutional mental health,” confides Walz. “I left the space for educational background blank. They bought it.”

After custodial work proved pointless and a stint in Walz’s woodshop disastrous (a minor fire broke out after paint brushes left to soak in paint stripper on a sunny windowsill heated to combustion), Walz discovered the passion for coffee Bill had cultivated on his graveyard shifts at the country club. He set up Bill in the hallway with a coffeemaker. Bill happily served the teachers and students of North Hall, and his open heart and simple joy made his table a popular meeting place. When the hall became impassable, the school made Bill move his café into a tiny closet space. When that proved too small, they gave him a classroom, and Wild Bill’s Coffee Shop was born. For the next eight years, Bill would hold court in North Hall, dropping in on the second-floor pre-school for story time and playing the “Too Fat Polka” on his harmonica, and generally brightening the day of everyone he came in contact with.

Which is not to say the university warmed to Walz’s ways. Even with Wild Bill’s covering its operating costs, he had to constantly defend its existence. When he accepted as a Master’s Degree candidate a man with a prison record, he had to explain

himself. When the university signed an exclusive contract with Coca-Cola, Wild Bill’s defiantly served Pepsi. Walz could feel the paradigm of the university shifting from education as a process, to education as a product; an atmosphere where helping the mentally handicapped and recovering addicts was neither cost effective nor a public relations success.

Eventually, something had to happen.

## Barrymor and the clown

Barry and Bev Morrow eventually left Iowa City to pursue Barry’s dream of writing for the big screen. Though Bill would miss his friend Barrymor (Bill’s memory for names was terrible, and he often called folks by an approximation he could remember, or simply “Buddy”), he stayed in Iowa City, living in Mae Driscoll’s boarding house. Rabbi Jeffery Portman, who Bar Mitzvahed Bill at age 67, became his new legal guardian. Bill continued to make coffee, greet the children and play his harmonica.

Barry wrote a script and sold it to CBS. The made-for-TV movie, *Bill*, starred Mickey Rooney as a mentally retarded man who escapes the cruelty of institutional life to share his gifts of kindness and simple wisdom with a very young Dennis Quaid. When it aired in 1981, it was a hit, tipping the Gallup scales with millions tuning in to watch. Millions more tuned in to the Emmy’s to see Morrow honored for his screenplay, and Mickey Rooney for Best Actor.

The real Bill Sackter became an instant celebrity and national icon in the fight for the rights of the disabled. He was given an award by then Iowa Gov. Robert Ray. He was invited to all the talk shows, to lead the halftime festivities of a professional football game, to a White House meeting with President Reagan. A sequel was filmed with a young Helen Hunt helping Mickey Rooney in his struggles. Iowa City declared “Bill Sackter Days,” and thousands of his local fans poured out their appreciation for this accidental hero. Barry Morrow became a national spokesperson for the rights of the

handicapped. His college buddy and former garage-band mate Jack Doepeke, who’d given up rock and roll to become the nationwide official Ronald McDonald, used his influence to help get the word out as well. What had begun as a humble experiment in kindness and understanding became a national sensation.

## The Mad Hatter

Del Akkins never really stopped rebelling, and his leadership of Uptown Bill’s Mad Hatter Tea Room is just the latest leg on his road less traveled. After getting clean and sober, Akkins wanted a place where he and his friends could have tea—a clean, well-lit place free from the temptation of drugs and alcohol that had plagued Del for much of his younger days. A tea room, now that would be just the thing.

Never mind that Del is the 400-pound gorilla that can sit wherever he wants. Never mind that he drives a Harley-Davidson to pick up the tea, and the circle of friends dainty-sipping with extended pinkie fingers were once members of his motorcycle club. Never mind that he collects knives and swords and cooks the best cheesecake this side of Sara Lee. Del is a man comfortable with contradiction.

“I would park the Harley, and the boys would come in for tea,” he explains, nonchalantly, once again readjusting his hip sack across the huge expanse of his belly. Pushing back the skull-and-bones handkerchief to scratch the gray bristle of his hair, Del leans back in his chair. What could be more natural?

According to Walz, Del picked up some bad habits in Southeast Asia after his tour in Vietnam. When he returned to the United States, he spent time raising Harley-Davidson hell in Louisiana, and later hiding out on the West Coast, before returning to Iowa City to make a go at college. “I was not a good student,” Del admits. “But I was a great drinker.”

He dropped out of college, and started on a road to sobriety, albeit astride a chopper. For years, he looked for an alcohol-free hangout, and the Mad Hatter Tea Room became that haven: “A place for me and the boys to hang out,” but tea alone would not pay the rent. Knowing “a little about music,” Del created a performance space in the Tea Room and invited a gang of artists as contradictory as he to perform. The typical calendar finds room for the likes of Cranial Decay and Edie Carey, though not on the same night. Local greats Sam Knutson, Ben Schmidt and King Toad have made Hatter



appearances, and Del supports local up-and-comers with a weekly open mic night, co-sponsored by JP Claussen of the Mud River Collective.

"Our crowd is different," Del admits. "But we give a lot of people a place to go." He has a special place in his heart for the Wednesday Heavy Metal Jam for local youth. "It is a safe place for them to be, where their parents know where they are, and they can do their own thing."

And what's more rebellious than that?

## Ends and fragile beginnings

When Bill Sackter did not come down for breakfast on the morning of June 16, 1983, Mae went to his room to check on him and found him dead in his beloved easy chair. His ulcerated leg wound, a reminder of the beating he took as a child at Faribault, had resulted in a blood clot that stopped his heart. Bill was 70 years old.

Wild Bill's stayed open, and Walz continued to run it with student volunteers and handicapped employees, but Bill's example had inspired him to do more, go further. He opened a branch at the International Center, which lasted two years. He began encouraging entrepreneurs in his midst, helping his disabled co-workers to write grants to start their own businesses. Over the years, the distant cruelty of the bureaucracies got to him: the State of Minnesota threatened to sue Bill's estate for the cost of his institutionalization. When they learned that Bill had earned nothing from the movies made of his life, and when Rabbi Portman made Minnesota's intentions very public, they backed down. The University of Iowa threatened to close Wild Bill's if Walz did not turn over financial control of the modest enterprise. He was spending more and more time in committees and in meetings, and less time doing Social Work. Walz left the university to open Uptown Bill's, an expansion of the dream.

For his part, Morrow continued his crusade to change the popular face of mental illness with his Oscar-winning script for *Rain Man* and is currently working with Walz and local documentarian Lane Wyrick on a documentary of Bill's life.

"We want his place in folklore to be solidified," explains Walz. "The first film was a start, but if we can get his story into schools, into homes, then we can really change some minds about who these people are."

Morrow's addition of Bill's story to film

For the next eight years, Bill would hold court in North Hall, dropping in on the second-floor pre-school for story time and playing the "Too Fat Polka" on his harmonica, and generally brightening the day of everyone he came in contact with.

may keep his folklore electronically alive, but to really win the hearts and minds, there needs to be a human connection, and this worries Walz more than anything.

As downtown property values rise, rents continue to skyrocket, forcing non-profit sanctuaries for the downtrodden—never a model for successful capitalism—to find cheaper accommodations on the outskirts of Iowa City. The Community Mental Health Center will soon move from its longtime home on South College Street to the border with Coralville. Proposals for a homeless shelter call for building in distant, low-rent neighborhoods or near the city limits.

"There won't be much left," Walz worries. "If you are going to be in this location you are going to pay heavy rent, and location is everything, otherwise all we end up with is bars. They've driven out everything but bars."

More than just making downtown safe for more bars and student apartments, more than simply saving these organizations money, this trend physically marginalizes the mentally and emotionally handicapped. As these services leave downtown for remote parts of the city, it will become easier to forget about these troubled souls, easier to stereotype their behavior and ignore their needs. Out of sight, out of mind. Without real, physical connection, genuine acceptance, understanding and community will be impossible.

The owner of the building that houses Uptown Bill's has been patient and generous, and Walz helped secure Community Development Block Grants for the next three years, but rent is rent, business is business, and Walz wonders if the Small Mall will ever turn a profit. Walz does not draw a salary from Uptown Bill's (he's retired, remember?) and uses much of the profit from his furniture restoration business to cover the Mall's debts.

"If 10 people a day chose to buy their coffee here instead of a convenience store,

we'd be fine," Walz explains.

A few dollars here and there is what measures the long-term success in this experiment, but support from the general public has been slow to snowball. In the beginning, Walz believed that college students would come in droves to the Small Mall, located as it is between campus and thousands of student apartments. How could it fail? A quiet, smoke- and alcohol-free place to study, with the good feeling of helping others thrown in for good measure. But the students have been slow to come. Walz hopes that word of mouth will get out, that people will be drawn in by the eclectic music, the promise of caffeine and the painted glass of the front windows, that this experiment will be a moral and financial success. Until then, the kindness of others keeps the doors open and the coffee brewing.

## The next Bill Sackter?

Fliers for the Blue Hat Club promise a "Portly Friendly" philosophy for the group's daily 7:30am meetings, with the promise of miraculous weight loss simply through attendance. Though no one in the room risks malnourishment, the weight they all bear is more spiritual than physical—a karmic weight-watchers meeting, if you will.

No election made 74-year-old Dorothy Newmire club president; she is just the toughest. Today she stays only a moment before heading out to chauffeur folks in need around Iowa City. Walz refers to Newmire as a "Street Angel," her soul untarnished by a potty mouth and checkered past.

"She is the kind that will drive you to church, but you won't catch her coming in with you," Walz chuckles. "She's good, but crooked, unorthodox." Walz ventures that Dorothy may be the next Bill Sackter. High praise, indeed. For her part, Dorothy says of Tom, "Many people do not realize how good he is." That seems hard to believe, and it turns out she's referring to Walz's guitar playing. "No," Walz says, modest as ever, "I'm just a beginner." **LV**



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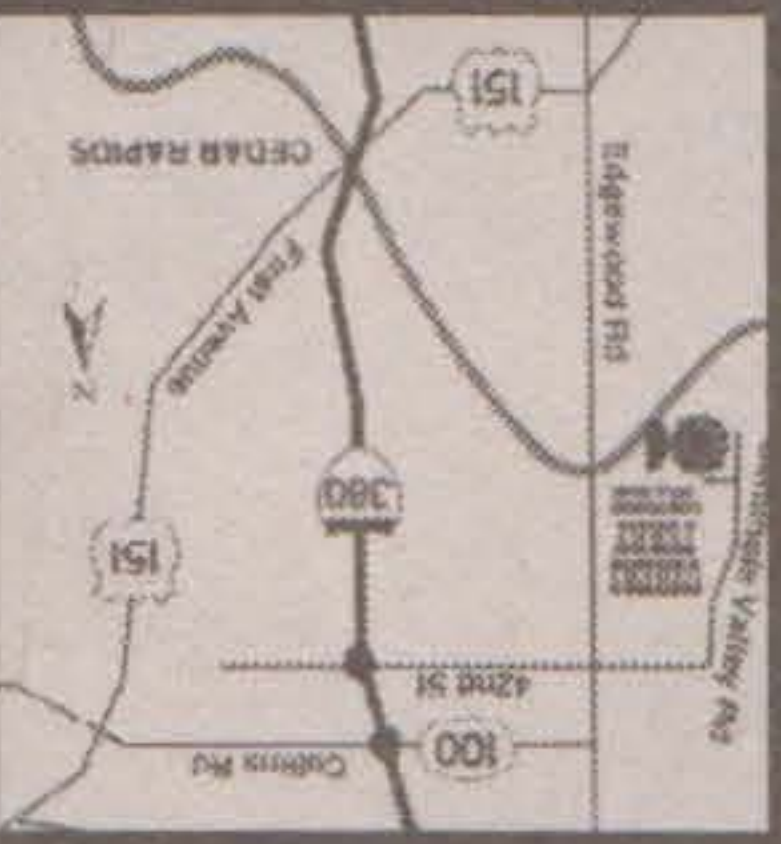
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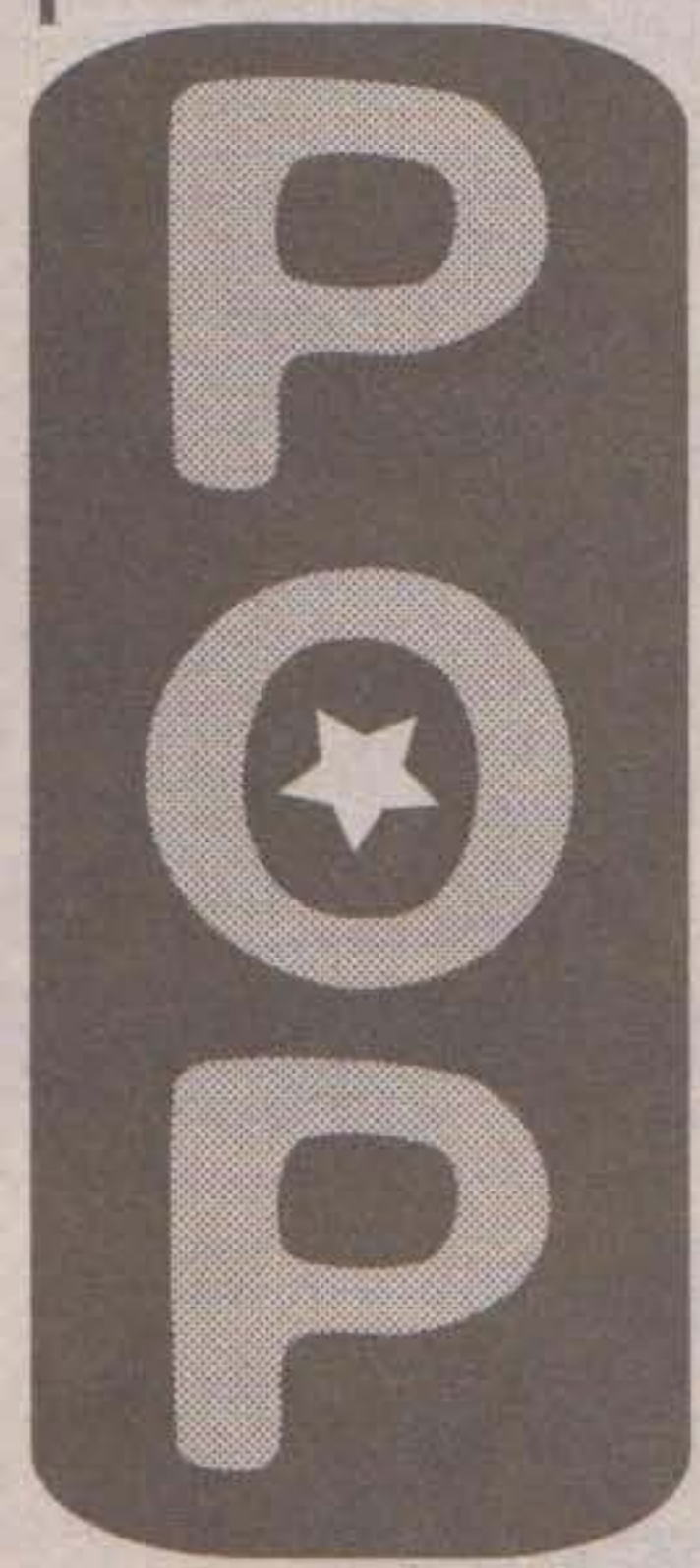
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## The Polyphonic Spree makes me happeeeeeeeeee!

prairie



Kembrew  
Mcleod

The Polyphonic Spree is a band of twenty-something gypsies who translate joy into music, delivering their orchestral punk rock gospel throughout the world, from Dallas to Chicago to Tokyo. Oh, and by twenty-something, I'm not referring to their average age; rather, the number of musicians in the group—approximately 24 on their second album, *Together We're Heavy* (Hollywood Records).

This record features a standard lead singer, bass, drum and guitar lineup, though it's augmented by harp, French horn, trumpet, cello, violin, viola, Moog synthesizer, Theremin, glockenspiel and (gasp for breath) many, many voices. This Texas-based orch-pop group, whose songs can clock in at around 10 minutes, is quite pretentious—though I should point out this isn't always a bad thing (after all, pretension only means you're shooting high). Anyway, the Polyphonic Spree never take themselves too seriously; they temper their Emerson, Lake & Palmer bombast with a tickling of the Partridge Family. ELP wedded to the Partridge Family? I know, for some who lived through the 1970s this sounds like the worst of all plastic surgery disasters, a Brady Bunch marriage made in hell, the kind of you've-got-chocolate-in-my-peanut-butter musical merger that makes some fans want to come to blows. "...it was much more than a hunch that this group of slackers would somehow form a family—that's the way they became the Polyphonic Spree." (My imaginary lyrics, not theirs.)

Tim Laughter, formerly of 1990s alternarock also-rans Tripping Daisy, formed the gleeful Spree in 2000, an appropriate year for a scraggly group of wild-eyed longhairs who look like members of a cult (ones who took the electric Kool-Aid acid test, Jim Jones style). Clad in white robes—wearing either Converse hightops or simply going barefoot, the official outfitter of hipsters and hippies, respectively—they unleash upon listeners a multi-instrumental, multi-vocal wall of sound that is both light and heavy. Their live performances are a sight to see, a spectacle that can win over even the most jaded of hipsters; there's lots of jumping for joy, literally. The



Polyphonic Spree inspire comparisons to the Free Design, a favorite group of mine from the late 1960s that specialized in LSD-laced adult contemporary counter-cultural bubblegum pop (yes, I know this is an incredibly specific sub-genre, but no matter). Their 1967 almost-hit, "Kites Are Fun," sports what are perhaps the all-time stupidest lyrics ever to be exhaled from a sentient being's mouth: "See my kite, it's green and white/laughing in its distant flight/all that's between us is a little yellow string/but we like each other more than anything...Kites are fun!"

In The Polyphonic Spree, The Free Design appear to have spawned a sunny family of handclapping freakazoids recently dismissed in print as "Up With People wannabes." Yikes. It's a charge that is hard to refute, especially given that the Polyphonic Spree use bubble-making machines at their live shows. Bubbles! It's the exact sort of

at all seduced by the lush, multilayered instrumental beauty of recent albums by the Flaming Lips or Grandaddy (or, for that matter, oldies by the Beach Boys) will be susceptible to catching the Polyphonic bug. Otherwise, you might already be immunized. If you can make it through *Together We Are Heavy's* eight-and-a-half-minute opening track, "A Long Day Continues/We Sound Amazed," still wanting more—rather than yearning to strangle the lead singer, whose upper register voice kisses the sky—then it's likely the rest of the album will draw you in with a big, warm hug. The aforementioned opening number compresses the essence of the group into one tidy (and yet sprawling) package: interweaving choral vocal arrangements, HUGE instrumental flourishes and tempo changes that go from the melancholic to the manic.

Yes, it's a gimmick. But given that this trippy troupe has endlessly toured in

Nevertheless, to loosely paraphrase Spinal Tap, there's a thin line between pop and poop, and the Polyphonic Spree occasionally come close to sounding full of shit. The thing that saves them is the almighty melody.

display famously repudiated by the Prince of Fucking Darkness, Ozzy Osborne. (Fittingly, another brilliantly dim-witted tune by the Free Design was "Bubbles," whose lyrics went "chewin' bubblegum and blowing big bubbles, gettin' rid of all my troubles.") The Spree's lyrics are similarly idiotic—"it's the sun and it makes me smile" and "la la, la la, la, la la la"—but a) they're conscious of this fact and b) if moronic lyrics disqualified our enjoyment of pop music, then there would be slim pickings, indeed. Time to turn in your Abba and Stooges records to the Taste Police.

Nevertheless, to loosely paraphrase Spinal Tap, there's a thin line between pop and poop, and the Polyphonic Spree occasionally come close to sounding full of shit. The thing that saves them is the almighty melody. Anyone who has been

a sardine tin can of a bus that contains nothing more than standing room and 24 bunk beds, they likely believe in what they're doing. After all, wink-wink-nudge-nudge irony only takes you so far, and in the cramped quarters of a tour bus I'd imagine it'd be approximately 12 miles before a full-blown melee transpired. The group's glowing musical heart ultimately triumphs over the excessive ridiculousness that is their foundation, striking a tenuous, but interesting, balance. The Polyphonic Spree ultimately reduce this PhD-earning, dropping-knowledge-on-your-ass pseudo intellectual hipster-doofus to uttering silly, unsophisticated one- and two-syllable descriptors: this group is really weird; they sound pretty; their music makes me happy. At the end of the day, that's enough for me. **LV**

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## O Canada

A slug of recent releases sheds light on those odd birds: the Canadians



**Fred Eaglesmith,**  
*Balin* (AML)



**Gordon Lightfoot,**  
*Harmony*  
(Spin Art)

**Various Artists,**  
*The Songs of Fred Eaglesmith: A Tribute*  
(Twangoff)



**K.D. Lang's**  
*Hymns of the  
49th Parallel*  
(Nonesuch)



**The Tragically  
Hip,**  
*In Between Evolution*  
(Zoë)

**Various Artists,**  
*Beautiful: A Tribute to Gordon  
Lightfoot*  
(Borealis)

It's summer in Iowa, the time of year when a young person's fancy turns to cooler terrains, the land of Molson and Labatt, up north where geese grow fat and the bacon fries lean; you know, Canada. The year's Canadian music scene has been an exciting one, with our neighbors to the north circulating all sorts of musical goodies to US markets. This review will examine a half dozen or so recent releases to provide a sampling of what's out there, a taste to stimulate your interest, rather than a best-of guide or an exhaustive list. The discs share a distinctly Canadian sensibility. The artists define themselves as outsiders who don't want to be admitted into mainstream society, which on one level suggests they prize their non-US status, even though this inherently marginalizes their commercial success.

K.D. Lang's latest release seems the logical place to begin as the adult alternative vocal stylist takes on an all-Canadian songbook with the appropriately titled, *Hymns of the 49th Parallel*. Lang covers classics by such notable Northern artists as Leonard Cohen ("Bird on a Wire," "Hallelujah"), Joni Mitchell ("A Case of You," "Jericho") and Neil Young ("Helpless," "After the Gold Rush"). She also sings material by younger Canadian artists like Jane Siberry, Bruce Cockburn and Ron Sexsmith. Lang phrases the lyrics carefully, annunciating each word like it was crystalline poetry. She employs sparse production techniques (she and guitarist Ben Mink co-produced

the disc) so that the material sounds as if it were recorded in an old church rather than a recording studio. She's minimally backed up by just a handful of musicians on mostly acoustic instruments.

Anyone familiar with the aforementioned chestnuts by Cohen, Young and Mitchell knows that their narrators seek connection to something or someone outside the self. Their Canadian identity lends itself to feeling "Helpless" or like a "Bird on a Wire" or like Mitchell, wistfully drawing a map of Canada on a cocktail napkin while sitting at the bar. Lang's plaintive vocals stoically convey deep yearnings for love whether hiding in a "bombed out basement" (Young) or "watching the walls come tumbling down" (Mitchell).

Oddly missing from Lang's tribute to Canadian musicians is a song by the great singer-songwriter Gordon Lightfoot. More than a dozen Northern artists, including the Cowboy Junkies, The Tragically Hip, Cockburn and Sexsmith pay tribute to Lightfoot on *Beautiful: A Tribute to Gordon Lightfoot*. The various musicians select terrific items from throughout Lightfoot's five-decade career. Choice morsels include Blue Rodeo's lively rendition of "Go Go Round," Maria Muldaur's wry version of "The Same Old Obsession" and Jesse Winchester's satirically upbeat "Sundown."

Lightfoot is not resting on his laurels, recently releasing *Harmony*, his first new record in five years, which fits seamlessly into his canon of artful, folk-style pop

music. Lightfoot has always affected the persona of a chivalrous gentleman, an errant knight troubadour, and he maintains it here. The best songs, like the salute to a muse "Inspiration Lady" and the travel anthem "River of Light," reveal his gallant Canadian sensibility through courteous, old-fashioned-style language and well-mannered phrasing. He's the hero who always comes to help but never comes to stay.

Another Canadian singer-songwriter Lang overlooked is the maestro of the rural working class, Fred Eaglesmith. Eaglesmith was also recently honored with a tribute CD, *The Songs of Fred Eaglesmith: A Tribute*, and his admirers come from across the globe and include Australian Kasey Chambers, Texan Slaid Cleaves and one-time Iowa Citian Teddy Morgan. Eaglesmith's songs about farm auctions, good dogs, stubborn men and ornery women seem located in the Northern countryside where independence and failure go hand in hand. Highlights include Robbie Fulks' hillbilly-style version of Eaglesmith's murder ballad "Flowers in the Dell," Mary Gauthier's cover of the rootsy weeper "Your Sister Cried" and Gurf Morlix's guitar-whipped, train-wreck rendition of the brutish "49 Tons."

Fred Eaglesmith has also continued to release good music. His live-in-the-studio *Balin* features high and lonesome bluegrass vocal harmonies and stringed instrumentation as if Eaglesmith's native Ontario



were located somewhere in Kentucky. Eaglesmith sings about poor farm folk who have to work for others or sell the family's homemade canned fruits to pay the bills. Unlike in most American songs about po' folk, Eaglesmith's po' folk resignedly accept their fate. They maintain their dignity and fight against the odds, but they know they are going to lose. The best songs include his odes to functioning farm machinery, "John Deere B" and "Small Motors," and the pragmatic apology "I Shot Your Dog." Eaglesmith's performance is homespun without being hokum, as he wistfully sings about those that work the earth for a living.

On the other side of the sonic spectrum lies the five-piece, hard-edged rock combo The Tragically Hip. Their latest release should make them the darlings of the American underground. Recorded in Seattle with producer Adam Kaspar (Pearl Jam, Foo Fighters, Queens of the Stone Age), *In Between Evolution* drips with sweaty urgency and sneered lyrics. The 13 songs rage against war and the evils of modern society. Vocalist and lyricist (and published poet) Gord Downie pens sharp-edged ditties that reveal the meanness inherent in everyday life. Like fellow Canadian rocker Neil Young, Downie refuses to accept the hypocrisy of leaders who instigate global hostilities and paint the atrocities in colors of glory and honor. On songs like "It Can't be Nashville Every Night" and "Meanstreak," Downie identifies himself as belonging to the society that wreaks havoc on the globe as well as its own citizens. He doesn't stand as a Canadian criticizing the United States. He just points out the nightmare world in which all North Americans live and create for others.

Don't confuse these songs with propaganda. The Tragically Hip make art out of global chaos. Consider the pounding poignancy of the aptly titled "Are We Family." Ably abetted by drummer Johnny Fay's steady beat, bassist Gord Sinclair's pulsating undertow and the biting twin-guitar interplay of Robby Baker and Paul Langlois, Downie sings, "It's only human to want and have everything that you got/and more often than not, take it to the nth degree./Here we go, give me \$10 and a head start/'cause where he goes the puzzle's pulling apart/ And here's the senior yelling calmly at the street, 'Are we family, or what?'"

This ain't no "We are the World" or even "We are Family," it's a world of strangers who talk but never listen. It's the voice of Canadians in the wilderness, whether confused in the city streets or the back woods, looking for the metaphorical lost America of love. **LV**

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# CALENDAR

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## Art/Exhibits

### AKAR

4 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 351-1227

Group Show: *Iowa Potters*, Aug. 6-19.

### Brucemore

2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-7375

*Animal House*, honoring the exotic and local animals that have called Brucemore home, through May.

### Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503

*In-Formed by Nature*, Mary Merkel-Hess; *Slices of Life*, Emily Martin; both through Aug. 29 • *Villa to Grave: Roman Art and Life*, 150 Roman objects—sculpture, frescoes, jewelry, furniture, coins and other decorative art objects—displayed in a recreated Roman architectural setting, through Aug. 25, 2005 • *Mauricio Lasansky: The Nazi Drawings*, through Oct. 3. (See *Words* listing for more)

### Faulconer Gallery

Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell, 641-269-4660

Mark Lombardi: *Global Networks*, complex diagrams of influence showing how money, power and politics are intertwined in the global economy, through Aug. 1 • *Danica Phelps: Writers Trade*, combines the arts of drawing and accounting to document her financial and personal transactions, through Sept. 12 • *Austin Thomas*, addresses concepts of personal connection and self-awareness by creating environments for social interaction in which the viewer becomes a participant, through Sept. 12.

### Iowa State Bank & Trust

102 S. Clinton St., Iowa City

*Contemporary Quilts by Nine Local Quilters*, quilts by Diedre Fleener, Sally Glass, Nancy Hollenbeck, Diane Lohr, Dawn McKenzie, Jackie Morrical, Mary Ott, Donna Sanders and Theresa Weihe.

### Lorenz Boot Shop

132 S. Clinton St., Iowa City, 339-1053

*Iowa City...And The World*, oil paintings and limited edition prints by West Liberty artist Garth Conley, through Oct. 1.

### Mt. Mercy College

Janalyn Hanson White Gallery, Cedar Rapids, 363-1323

*Summer Student Art Exhibit*, through Sept. 15.

### Public Space One

6 1/2 S. Dubuque St, Iowa City

*Ancient Cowboys*, Mervin Dunham's first public exhibit,

ballpoint pen and paper, and more, through Aug. 1.

### Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672

*United Action for Youth Art Exhibit*, mixed media, various artists, through August, lobby.

### Ruby's Pearl

323 E. Market St., Iowa City, 248-0032

*Fetish*, multi-media installation by Mel Doro and Kathy Thor, through August; opening reception Aug. 7, 6-8pm.

### Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City (unless noted otherwise)

*Pictorial Iowa City*, "cluster" displays of the history, culture and ambiance of Iowa City featuring work by Mary Gail Bentz, Stan Haring, Claudine Harris, and other Iowa City images and memorabilia, through Aug. 29 • *Samuel J. Kirkwood: From Dusty Miller to Iowa's Civil War Governor*, historical exhibit, Aug. 11-25.

### UI Hospitals and Clinics

Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417

*quiltz and dollz*, Patti Zwick, Aug. 4-Oct. 27, Boyd Tower West Lobby • Carol Carter, photography, Aug. 6-Oct. 29, Boyd Tower East Lobby • Matt Moyer, ceramics, through Sept. 17, Main Lobby • Dan Cosentino, photography, through Oct. 1, Patient and Visitor Activities Center East • Sara Bell, paintings, through Sept. 30, Patient and Visitor Activities Center West • 2004 Iowa Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Miniature Prints, through Sept. 30, Patient and Visitor Activities Center West.

### UI Main Library

UI campus, Iowa City

*Velocipedomania: The Origin and Evolution of the Bicycle*, through November, North Exhibit Hall.

### UI Museum of Art

150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727

*Pivot*, a video and sound installation by UI film professor Leighton Pierce, Aug. 25-Oct. 17 • *Vision and Views: Master Prints from the Collection*, featuring early European prints from the museum's collection, through Oct. 17.

## Music

### Brucemore

2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-7375

*Bluesmore*, with Joe Bonamassa, Melvin Taylor and the Slack Band, Jessie Payo and the Raindogs, and The MB~Bluz Band, Aug. 7, 4-10pm • Cabaret in the Courtyard: singer Janelle Lauer, Aug. 13-15, 7:30pm; jazz pianist Sidney James Wingfield, August 20-22, 7:30pm.

### Craig Erickson

Solo acoustic, Aug. 6, 7-10pm, Java Creek Coffee House • Solo acoustic, Aug. 7, 7-11pm, Manchester Steak House • Craig Erickson Project, Aug. 19, 9pm-1am, O'Malley's, CR • Solo acoustic, Aug. 27, 8-10pm, Brewed Awakenings, CR.

### Gabe's

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 354-4788

Caliban, Scars of Tomorrow, Dead to Fall, Reflux, A Day in Black and White, July 29, 5pm doors • The Slats, Clair De Lune, The Mittens, The Grackles, July 30 • The Catalyst, Hemlock, Duhkha, July 31 • Evergreen Terrace, A Life Once Lost, Fear Before the March of Flames, Red Chord, Aug. 1, 6pm doors • Del Cielo, Fort Rile Dog, 2000 Million 10, The Browning, Aug. 4 • Single Lane Ahead, Aug. 5 • Athletic Autonaton (ex-Arab on Radar), Organz, The Vine, The Archer, Aug. 6 • DJ Alert, Aug. 7 • Inner-Kube, Bonedrag, Two Words, Aug. 8 • Prom Night Tornado, Law of All Ends, Bury The Survivors, Trendy Bastard, Aug. 9, 6pm doors • The Black Mollys, Lyin' Heart, Aug. 10 • Rapidier Than Horsepower, Mae Shi, Casiotone for the Painfully Alone, Meth and Goats, Aug. 11 • Shame Train, Aug. 13 • Kita, Bottom Feeder, The Hoax, Aug. 14 • High On Fire, Bongzilla, Aug. 16 • Haste The Day, Aug. 18 • A Copper Wish, The Lifestyle, Aug. 20 • Marah-Mar, Twelve Canons, Aug. 21 • Glasseater, Throw Down, Calico System, Aug. 22 • The Vets, Aug. 23 • Qwel, Maker, Aug. 25 • Paul Cary, Joe Buck (Legendary Shack Shakers), Aug. 26 • Troubled Hubble CD release, Aug. 27 • Bad Fathers, Autodramatics, Aug. 28.

### The Green Room

509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-4350

*Blues Jam Mondays, Funk and Jazz Jam Tuesdays*

The Phix, July 29 • Dr. Z's Experiment, July 30 • Hoopride, July 31 • Jensen Connection, Aug. 5 • Dr. Z's, Groove Sector, Aug. 6 • MC Angle, Rebel's Advocate, Aug. 7 • Tea Leaf Green, Aug. 12 • Public Property, Aug. 13 • The Heart of Gold Band, Gglitch, Danny Jive & the Uptown 5, Aug. 14 • Nikki Lunden, Aug. 18 • Natty Nation, Lunar Gravy, Aug. 20 • Cool Zey, Rebel's Advocate, DJ XXL, Aug. 21 • Jazz Mandolin Project, Aug. 26 • Breechloader, Burnout, Aug. 27 • Mr. Baber's Neighbors: The Solar String Band, Aug. 28 • Drums and Tuba, Aug. 29.

### Hooverfest

Aug. 7-8, Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, West Branch, 643-5327 or 800-828-0475

Aug. 7 - Banana Slug String Band, 6pm • Big Wooden Radio, 7:15pm • CR Municipal Band, 8:30pm (fireworks).

Aug. 8- Eastern Iowa Brass Band, 2:15pm • Iowa Opry, 3:30pm.

### The Java House

211 E. Washington St., 341-0012

WSUI's "Iowa Talks Live from the Java House," Fridays, 10am



### Macbride Auditorium

#### UI campus, Iowa City

Holly Near, Nikki Lunden, benefit for Emma Goldman Clinic, Aug. 19, 7pm, tickets 337-2112, [www.emma-goldman.com](http://www.emma-goldman.com).

### Martini's

127 E. College St., Iowa City, 351-5536

Shows at 9:30pm

Johnny Kilowatt, July 30 • The Soul Searchers, July 31 • Joneztown, Aug. 6 • Gizmo, Aug. 7 • Brother Trucker, Aug. 13 • GrisFunk, Aug. 14 • The Diplomats, Aug. 20 • Billy Lee & The Compact 3, Aug. 21 • Blues Tunas, Aug. 27 • Johnny Kilowatt, Aug. 28.

### The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529

Open Mike Mondays, 8pm • Wednesdays, Burlington Street Bluegrass Band, Bluegrass Jam, 10pm • All music 9pm unless noted otherwise

Noah Earle, Aug. 5 • The Beggarmen, Shoe Money, Aug. 6 • David Huckfelt and Ben Ramsey, Ember Swift, Aug. 7 • David Rogers, Constie Brown, Aug. 12 • Catfish Keith, Aug. 13 • The Tornadoes, Aug. 14 • Four Shillings Short, Aug. 19 • Mike and Amy Finders, Aug. 20 • Camp Courageous Benefit, with David Zollo, The Instigators, Kristi Stremel, Aug. 21 • Nikki Lunden (CD release), Tell Julia, Aug. 22, 8pm • Arthur Dodge, Sam Knutson, Aug. 26 • David Zollo and the Body Electric, Aug. 27 • Salaam, North African traditional music, Aug. 28.

### Paramount Theatre

123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888

The String Cheese Incident, July 31, 8pm • Lorie Line and her Pop Chamber Orchestra, Aug. 24, 7:30pm.

### Ped Mall

#### Downtown Iowa City

Children's recording artist James Coffey, July 31, 3pm. (See *Festivals* for more) • Saul Lubaroff, Aug. 21, 4-7pm.

### Red Cedar Chamber Music

Marion, 377-8028

Violist Christine Rutledge joins Red Cedar Chamber Music artists Jan Boland (flute) and John Dowdall (guitar) for a preview of *Spillville Variations on a Theme by Dvorak*, a new work by 15 Iowa composers, inspired by music Dvorak wrote when he lived in Spillville in 1893; Aug. 7, 10:30am, Kingston Hill, 202 12th St. NW, Cedar Rapids; Aug. 7, 2pm, Meth-Wick Community, 1224 13th St. NW, Cedar Rapids.

### Sanctuary

405 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 351-5692

Jazz Jam hosted by bassist Israel Newman, Thursdays • Music at 9:30pm

Derek Drier Trio, July 31 • Equilateral Jazz Band, Aug. 5 • Robert "One-Man" Johnson, Aug. 6-7 • Blue Sky Research, jazz, Aug. 14.

### Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City

"Songs & Stories of Life (1960s-Present)," concert-lecture by folk musician Chey Ness, Aug. 18, 2pm.

# A-LIST

## Pivot

Ongoing • UI Museum of Art

Good, old-fashioned experimental art is sure hard to find these days. Same goes for multimedia work. Beginning Aug. 25, the UI Museum of Art will begin to remedy the situation with this experimental work-in-progress video installation by Leighton Pierce, a renowned filmmaker and UI Professor of Cinema and Comparative Literature. Pierce is hands-down one of the most talented artists on campus. His body of work of experimental films is both brilliant and accessible, defying the usual expectations associated with the "experimental" genre. Now don't let this official descriptions care you away: *Pivot* extends Pierce's interest in the relationships between sound/image, memory/emotion and time/rhythm. By creating complex visual and auditory patterns using a series of projected video loops and multi-channel sound, Pierce will provoke an engagement with the edges of memory, perception and emotional identification. This will be an active installation—the material exhibited will regularly change during the course of the show reflecting Pierce's exploration of his material within the gallery space. Through Oct. 17. 150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727.

## Irving B. Weber Days

Aug. 9-14 • IC Public Library

Check out the full schedule in the calendar under *Festivals*. There's lots going on, including not one, but two talks about historical barns, a presentation by IC treasure Lolly Eggers on the history of the IC Public Library. Plus an ice cream social with live music by the Salsa Band and a talk by Wayne Neuzil on the importance of the late IC historian Irving Weber's importance to our past and present. Not to be missed!



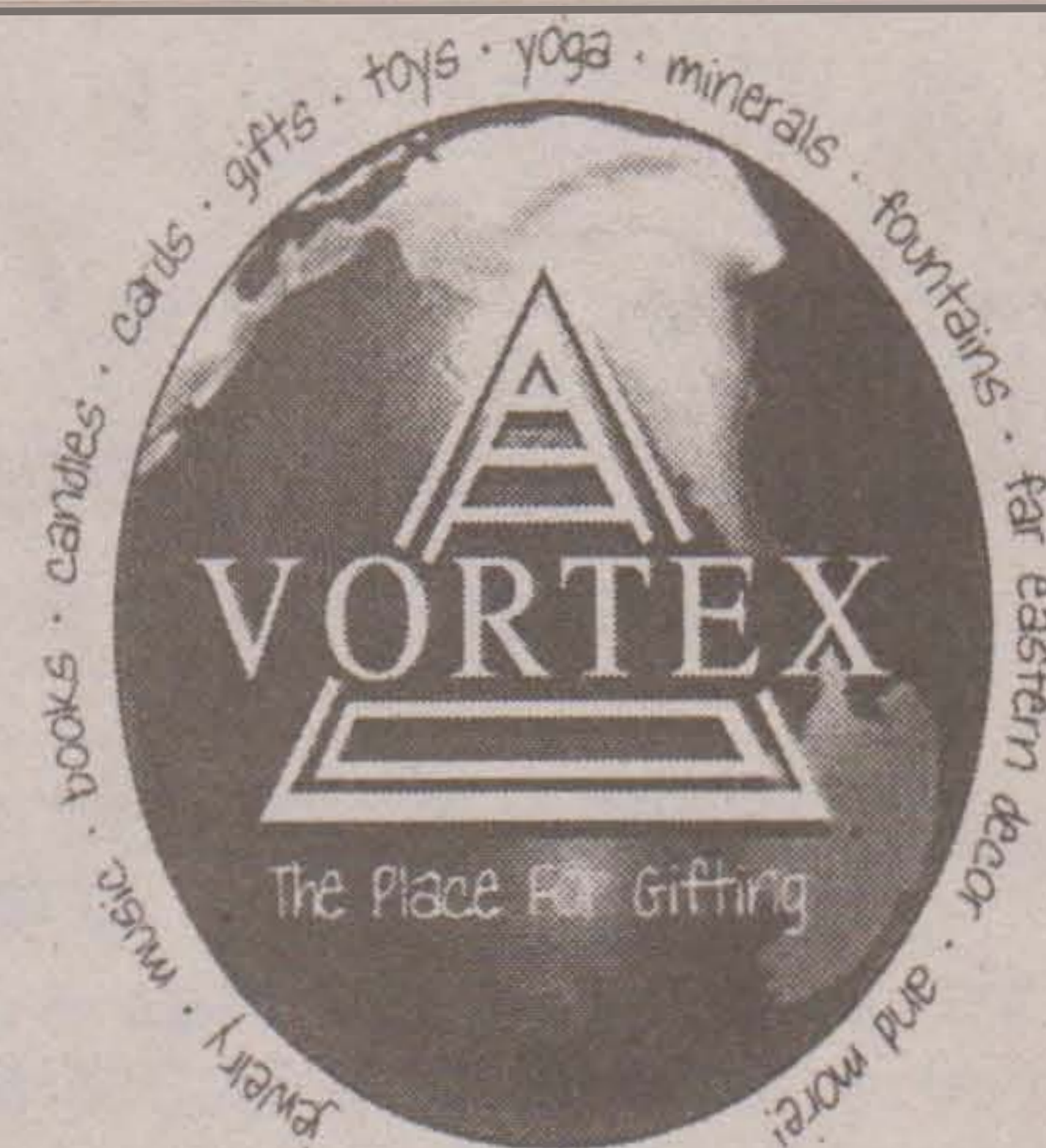
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### UI Hospitals and Clinics

Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417

Collo-ton Atrium, noon (unless noted otherwise)

Erin Ponto, classical, pop and ragtime harp, Aug. 11.

### UI Museum of Art

UI campus, Iowa City

Dan Knight, jazz piano, Aug. 6, 5pm.

### Uptown Bill's small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-0401

Mud River Open Mic, Fridays, 8pm • Irish Slow Session, Celtic jam (for more info contact Tara Dutcher, tara@schoolperformingarts.com), Sundays, 2-4pm • All shows 7pm unless otherwise indicated

Jeffrey Hedquist, July 29 • Blue Collar Monday, July 31

• Travis Houston, Aug. 5 • Pete Balestrieri, Aug. 7 •

The Unsung Forum (songwriters' workshop), Aug. 12 •

Tom Nothnagle's Guitar Show, Aug. 14 • Anne Heaton

& Frank Marotta Jr., Nick Stika, Aug. 18 • Potluck

Dinner and Jam, Aug. 19, 5-9pm • The Lost Toys, Aug.

21 • Chris Shaffer, Aug. 26 • Bree Clime-White, Aug.

28 • Nik Strait, Sept. 2.

### US Cellular Center

370 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888

Cher, Aug. 4, 7:30pm • Slipknot, Slayer, God Forbid,

Aug. 13, 7pm • Rod Stewart, Aug. 25.

### Ushers Ferry Historical Village

5925 Seminole Valley Trail NE, Cedar Rapids,

286-5763

Ushers Ferry Folk Festival, with Robin and Linda Williams, Danny Santos, Black Sheep, workshops and jam sessions starting at 1pm, Aug. 14, 4-10pm.

### Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 337-6464

Blues Jam hosted by Shade of Bacchus, Sundays 8pm-12am; Jam Band Jam hosted by Doggman Music Company, Wednesdays, 10pm

A Day In Black & White, Prom Night Tornado, Oregon

All, July 29, 6pm • One Love Sounds, July 31 • Nikki

Lunden & Friends, Aug. 5 • Angle's Hip Hop Show,

Aug. 6 • Dennis McMurrin & The Demolition Band,

Aug. 7 • Benjy Davis Project, Third Person, Aug. 13

• Funkmaster Cracker, Aug. 19 • Nicklebagofunk,

Aug. 20 • BJ Jagers & The Jagoffs, Aug. 21 • The

Providere Method, Aug. 24 • Public Property, Aug. 26 •

Euforquestra, Aug. 27 • Outdoor Concert, Aug. 28.

## Music Festivals/Series

### Friday Night Concert Series

Weather Dance Fountain Stage, downtown Iowa City, 6:30-9:30pm

Matthew Grimm, July 30 • Johnny Kilowatt, Aug. 6 •

Orquesta Alto Maiz, Aug. 13 • Kristie Stremel, Aug. 20

• Dogs on Skis, Aug. 27 • Big Wooden Radio, Sept. 3.

### Jazz Under the Stars

Noelridge Park, Cedar Rapids

7pm

Sax Attack, Aug. 5 • BillyLee Janey's Compak 3, Aug.

12 • Mike Maas and The Red Devil Down "Huge" Band,

Aug. 19 • CR Jazz Big Band, Aug. 26 •

### Market Music

Chauncey Swan Park, Iowa City

5-7pm

Jason Reeves Aug. 4 • Mike and Amy Finders Band,

Aug. 11 • Beggarman, Aug. 18 • Dave Moore, Aug.

25.

### Music in the Park

Morrison Park, Coralville

6:30-8pm

Mike and Amy Finders Band, Aug. 5.

### Project Art Summer Concert Series

UI Hospitals and Clinics, Iowa City, 353-6417

8th Floor Rooftop Terrace/Café, noon

Banjoy, bluegrass, July 30 • Mike and Amy Finders, folk

and bluegrass, Aug. 6 • Stones in the Field, Celtic, Aug. 13

• David Zollo, R&B, Aug. 20 • Annie Gaines, Aug. 27.

### Uptown Friday Nights

Greene Square Park, Downtown Cedar Rapids

5-8pm

Super Size Seven, July 30.

### West Branch Concert Series

Village Green, West Branch

7-8:30pm

Small World, July 30 • Dale Thomas Band, featuring

Melissa Spangler, Aug. 6, 7-11pm

## Auditions/Opportunities

### Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592

Auditions for Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, singers, dancers and actors wanted, Aug. 1-2, 7pm • Auditions

for *Magic 8-10 Minute One Acts for New Faces*, first-time actors wanted, Aug. 4-5, 7pm.

### Monster Design Studio

716 Oakland Rd. NE, Cedar Rapids, 365-1844

Monster Design Studio is putting together a master list of Cedar Rapids and surrounding area artists and artisans. Information will be available to anyone interested in following the artists' shows or hiring them for contract work. Artists will receive the list as well as be invited to make changes as often as needed to alert the public to their shows and exhibits. Contact Chris Warren at Monster Design Studio by email (monsterdesignstudio@yahoo.com) or the above phone.

## Dance

### Space/Place Theater

North Hall, UI campus, Iowa City

Kahraman/Near Eastern Dance Company, Aug. 27-28, 8pm.

## Theater/Performance

### The Java House

211 E. Washington St., 341-0012

WSUI's "Iowa Talks Live from the Java House," Fridays, 10am

### The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529

Westergaard & Witaske, two-man improv production by Lightning in a Bottle's Nick Westergaard and Chris Witaske, Aug. 3, 10, 17, 8pm.

### Old Creamery Theatre

Price Creek Stage, 39 38th Ave., Amana, 800-352-6262 (unless noted otherwise)

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Price Creek Stage: Wed., Fri., Sat. 8pm; Thurs., Sat., Sun. 3pm. Depot Theatre: Thurs. 3 & 8pm; Fri. & Sat 8pm; Sun. 3pm

Always...Patsy Cline, musical drama tracing the true story of friendship between country music legend Patsy Cline and a housewife from Houston, through Aug. 15, Price Creek Stage • *Amadeus*, Peter Shaffer's Tony Award-winning play about Mozart's rivalry with court composer Antonio Salier, through Aug. 15, Depot Theatre • *The Spitfire Grill*, a young woman arrives in a small Wisconsin town and is taken under the wing of Hannah, the owner of The Spitfire Grill, Aug. 20-Sept. 26, Price Creek Stage.

#### Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672  
'04-'05 Season Preview, Aug. 29, 4pm.

#### Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592  
7:30pm Thurs.- Sat.; 2:30pm Sun

*Big River*, Tony Award-winning musical based on Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, through July 31.

### Words

#### Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503

"The Spirit of Rome at Home," with Med Bickel, July 31, 11am-2pm • "Yet More About Me," with artist Emily Martin, Aug. 4, 12-1pm • "A Dash of Rome: Seasoning Classical Cuisine," with Amy Godwin, Aug. 7, 11am • "Magical Molds: Demonstrating the Art of Sand Casting," with Ruth Ipsan-Brown, Aug. 14, 1pm • "Works of Mother Nature," family workshop, Aug. 21, 1pm.

#### The Green Room

509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-4350  
*Poetry Slam*, Aug. 11 & 25, 9pm.

#### The History Center

615 1st Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-1501

May's Island/Kingston Walking Tour, experience the stories of the old town of Kingston and the history of CR's unique island with History Center historian Mark Hunter, Aug. 14, 1-2:30pm, call to pre-register • "Czech Radio," informal discussion with singer Millie Ortner and her memories of the golden age of radio, Aug. 15, 2-4pm • "CRANDIC on the Move!", Jeff Woods, marketing manager for the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway Co. (CRANDIC), shares stories, artifacts and video highlighting 50 years of inter-urban passenger service between CR and IC, Aug. 17, 12-1pm.

#### The Java House

211 E. Washington St., 341-0012  
WSUI's "Iowa Talks Live from the Java House," Fridays, 10am

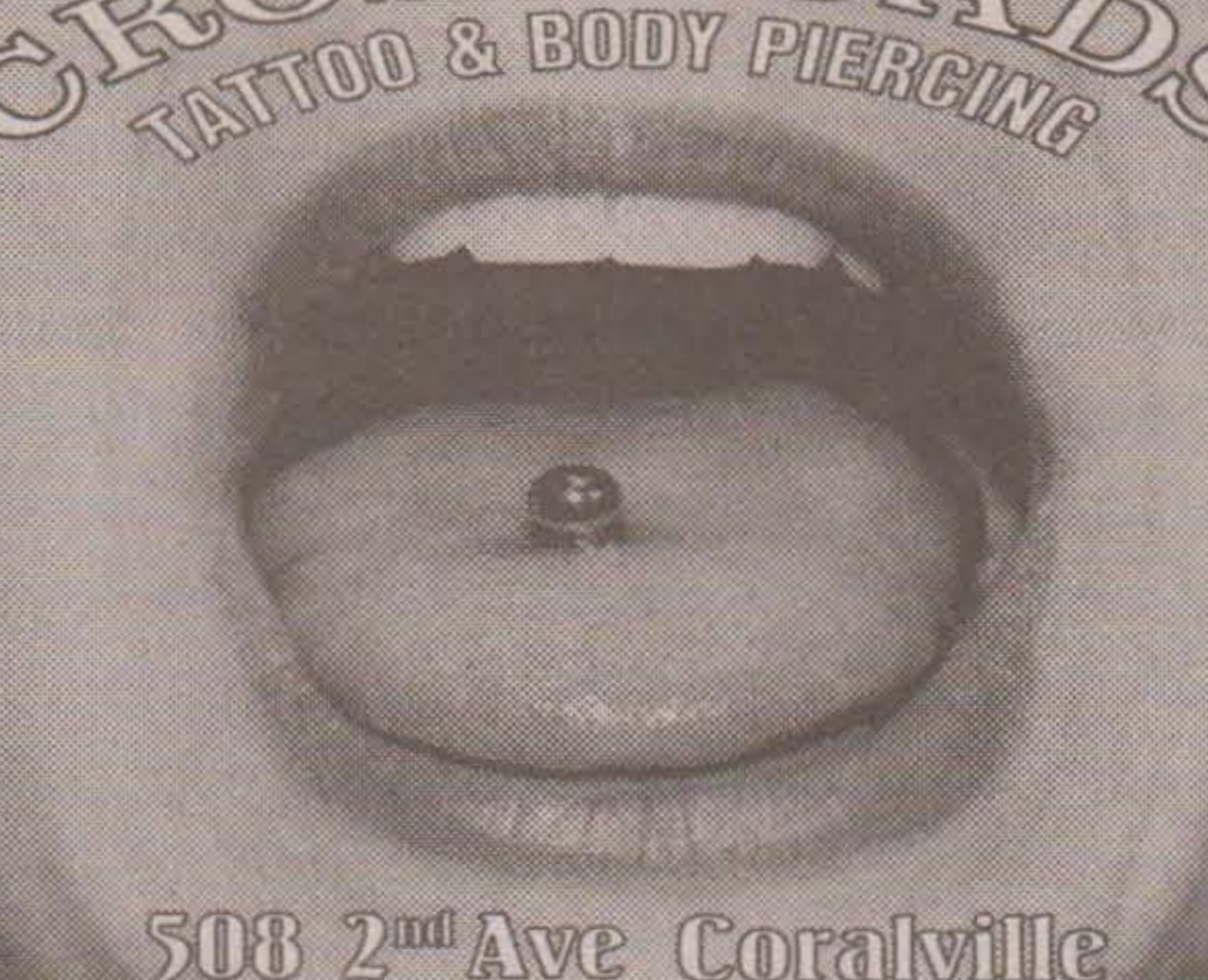
#### Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City (unless otherwise noted), 337-2681

All 8pm (unless otherwise noted). Broadcast live on WSUI (unless otherwise noted)

Lauren Grodstein reads from her first novel, *Reproduction is the Flaw of Love*, July 29 • Workshop grad Justin Cronin reads from his new novel, *Summer Guest*, July 30 • Minnesota mystery writer William Kent Krueger reads from *Blood Hollow*, Aug. 2.

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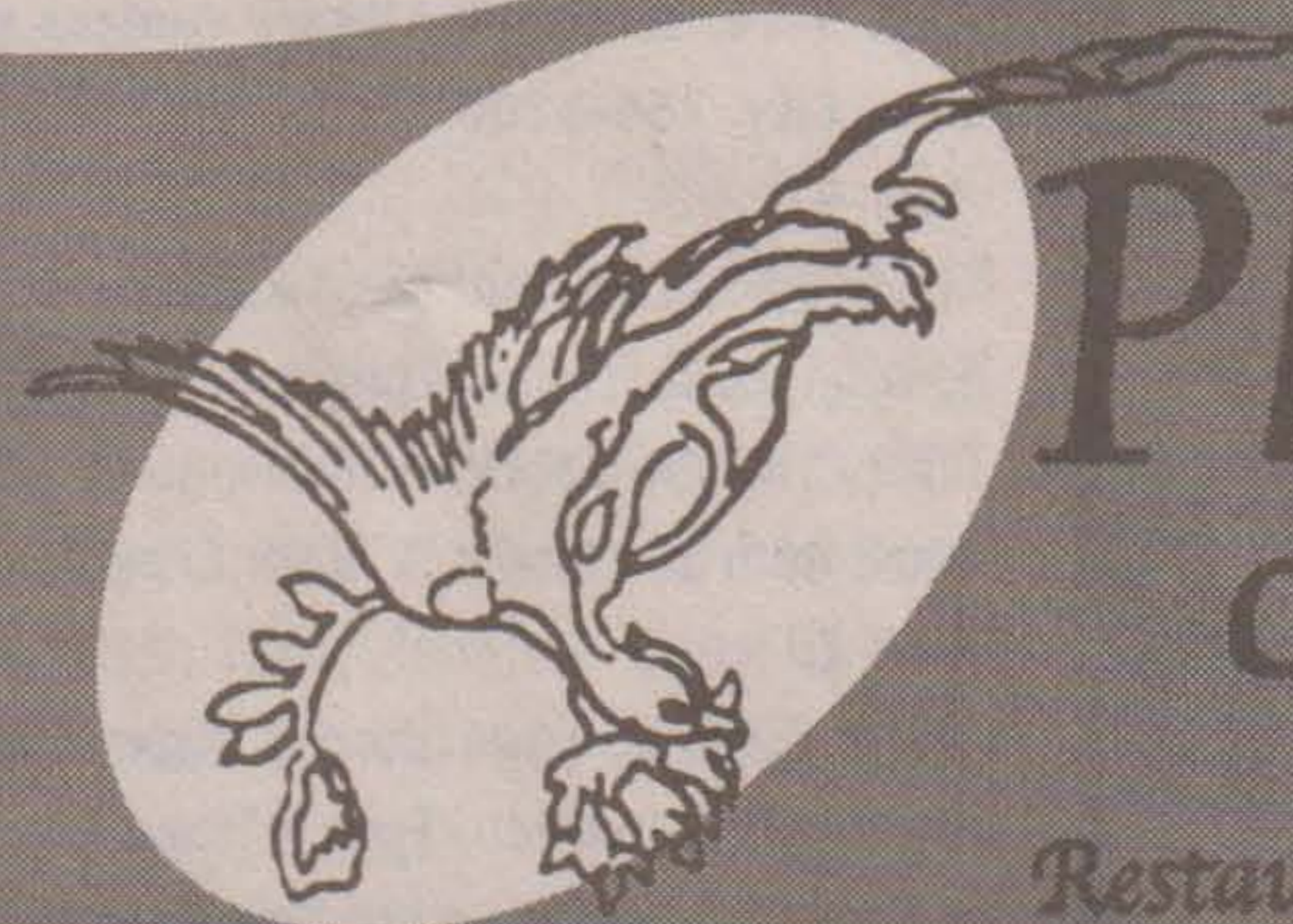
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⑤ **Jensen Connection**

⑥ **Dr. Z's / Groove Sector**

⑦ **MC Angle  
Rebel's Advocate**

⑪ **Poetry Slam**

⑫ **Tea Leaf Green**

⑬ **Public Property**

⑭ **The Heart of Gold Band  
Ggltch  
Danny Jive & the Uptown 5  
6-year Green Room Ann. Party**

**Nikki Lunden**

⑳ **Natty Nation  
Lunar Gravy**

㉑ **Cool Zey  
Rebel's Advocate  
DJ XXL**

㉕ **Poetry Slam**

26 **Jazz Mandolin Project**

㉗ **Breechloader, Burnout**

㉘ **Mr. Baber's Neighbors:  
The Solar String Band**

㉙ **Drums and Tuba**

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#### Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City

"Change & Progress: A Century in Review, Part VI. Korea, McCarthy, Ike and Television," presented by Loren Horton, Aug. 9, 2pm • "Songs & Stories of Life (1960s-Present)," concert-lecture by folk musician Chey Ness, followed by a composer/audience discussion of the songwriting process, Aug. 18, 2pm • "Tribute to a First Lady: Eleanor Roosevelt," Janie Yates Reading, Aug. 20, 2pm • "The Ironmen of 1939," presentation by Alvin Schroeder about the Hawkeye football team of 1939, Aug. 26, 10am • "Words on War from the Masters of the Art," presented by retired Army Colonel Dick Feddersen, Aug. 27, 2pm.

#### Film & Video

##### Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503

*Cleopatra: First Woman of Power*, Aug. 28, 1pm.

##### IC Public Library

123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

*Peace, Propaganda and the Promised Land: U.S. Media & the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, followed by discussion, Aug. 4, 7-9pm, Meeting Rm A.

#### Festivals

##### Family Fun Day and Concert with James Coffey

July 31, 1:30-4pm, Ped Mall, Iowa City

Face painting, crafts, games, costumed characters, popcorn and lemonade, performance by children's recording artist James Coffey (3pm).

##### Hooverfest

Aug. 7-8, Herbert Hoover National Historic Site, West Branch, 643-5327 or 800-828-0475

Music (see *Music* listing), Hooverball tournament, exhibits, parade, fireworks, childrens activities, see [www.hooverassoc.org](http://www.hooverassoc.org) for more info.

##### Iowa Renaissance Festival

Sept. 4-5, 11am-6pm, Middle Amana Park, Middle Amana Equestrian jousting, entertainment, food, artisan merchants, for more info: 641-357-5177 or [gregfest@netins.net](mailto:gregfest@netins.net).

##### Irving B. Weber Days

Aug. 9-14, IC Public Library (unless noted otherwise), Iowa City, 356-5200

Aug. 9

"Early Iowa Chatauquas," Kathryn Hodson, UI Libraries Special Collections, 2pm • "An Evening with Captain Clark," Wayne Kobberdahl brings to life Captain William Clark from the Lewis & Clark Expedition, 7pm.

Aug. 10

"Iowa City's Salvage Barn," Roger Gwinnup, Friends of Historic Preservation, 2pm • "Iowa City Businesses—Past & Present," walking tour, Ken Donnelly, Johnson County Historical Society, 6:30-8pm, tour begins at Weber Statue on Iowa Ave. and ends at Johnson County Historical Society exhibit space in Old Capitol Town Center.

Aug. 11

"If Barns Could Talk," Rich Tyler, 2pm • "History of the Iowa City Public Library," 2004 Irving B. Weber Days History Lecture by Lolly Eggers, retired library director, 7pm.

Aug. 12

"Pioneer Songs," Storytime with Mike Haverkamp, 10:30am • "Early Iowa Pioneer Women," with Bev Larsen, 2pm • "Harker's Barns," with author Michael Harker, 7pm.

Aug. 13

"Rare and Historic Medical Books, with Ed Holtum, 2pm • Iowa City Public Library Tours, meet in lobby, 6-7pm • Friday Night Concert and Ice Cream Social, with Orquesta de Jazz y Salsa Alto Maiz, Wayne Neuzil will sing the National Anthem & relate Irving Weber's importance to the past and present, free ice cream, 7pm, Downtown Iowa City.

Aug. 14

Weber History Quiz Bowl, 10am • Secrest Octagonal Barn Open House and Tours, live music, 1-2pm • Johnson County Historical Society Open Houses: Plum Grove, Old School House, Poor Farm/Asylum, 1-3pm.

#### Misc.

##### Brucemore

2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-7375

*The Eastern Iowa Garden and Landscape Show*, Aug. 28, 9am-4pm.

##### CSPS

1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580

*Starving Artist Picnic*, Aug. 15, 5-9pm, Lagoon Pavilion, Jones Park, Cedar Rapids.

##### Iowa City Babe Ruth Fall Baseball

Players born between Aug. 1, 1989 and July 31, 1992 eligible, registration forms at [www.geocities.com/icba-beruth/br2004/freg-04.html](http://www.geocities.com/icba-beruth/br2004/freg-04.html), registration deadline July 31. For more info contact Dave Redlawsk, 354-4532. Open to players from throughout Johnson and surrounding counties. Players outside Iowa City eligible if they meet age requirements and there is no Babe Ruth Fall Baseball program in their community.

#### Classes/Camps

##### Brucemore

2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-7375

*Introductory Class: Arranging Fresh Flowers*, July 31, 10am, call to register.

##### The History Center

Cedar Rapids, 362-1501

*Summer Camps for Kids: "Laura's Trunk,"* a look at life on the prairie in the time of Laura Ingalls Wilder's Little House books, second-fifth grade, Aug. 3-6, 9-11:30am • Calvin Camp for Preschoolers, History Center's mischievous rabbit friend, introduces young campers to the magic of museums and the joys of collecting, Aug. 10-13, 9-11:30am • Calvin Camp for Kindergarten & First Grade, Aug. 17-20, 9-11:30am.

##### Monster Design Studio

716 Oakland Rd. NE, Cedar Rapids, 365-1844

*Kids Art Classes*, Saturdays, 11am-12pm.

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Strange but True!

# News Quirks

Compiled by Roland Sweet

## Curses, Foiled Again

When police in Plainville, Conn., received an emergency call reporting a burglary in progress, officers arrived at the address provided and found Jack Peterson, 24, trying to rob a convenience store. Investigators said that Peterson had made the emergency call himself, intending to divert attention from the scene of his crime by giving a different address, but he mistakenly gave the address of the store he was robbing.

The FBI announced that bank robberies in Missouri dropped 36 percent in the past year since more than 230 banks there adopted a dress code declaring "no hats, no hoods, no sunglasses." The policy gives clerks and surveillance cameras a clear view of people's faces.

## Heil to the Chief

President George W. Bush exhibits "sadistic tendencies" and suffers from "character pathology," including "grandiosity" and "megalomania," viewing himself, America and God as interchangeable, according to a new book by a Washington psychiatrist that offers "an exploration of Bush's psyche." Justin A. Frank, a practicing psychiatrist for 35 years and a clinical professor at George Washington University Medical Center, told the Washington Post that he has never met the president but wrote "Bush on the Couch" using publicly available materials after he began noting Bush's behavior two years ago. "I was really very unsettled by him, and I started watching everything he did and reading what he wrote and watching him on videotape," Frank said. "I felt he was disturbed."

## Second-Amendment Follies

A holster manufacturer in Southampton, Pa., announced a recall of some 3,200 holsters designed for Glock handguns because the strap can catch the trigger and cause the weapon to fire

accidentally. The Fobus USA Holster Division of First Samco Inc., took the action after eight such guns discharged while they were being inserted into the holster.

## Irony Illustrated

A 50-ton crane brought in to remove trees that might topple and fall on a hill-top house near Brisbane, Australia, itself toppled and fell on the house. Its boom sliced the upper part of the dwelling almost in half. Police evacuated 10 surrounding houses, fearing that the crane might summersault down the hill and hit them, while awaiting a 200-ton crane to right the smaller one.

## Not-So-Great Escape

A Malaysian prison inmate, who convinced guards that he was having trouble breathing, was handcuffed to a hospital bed awaiting treatment when he managed to escape. According to district police chief Muhamad Fuad Talib, the prisoner climbed out a fifth-story window and jumped to a ledge two floors down but lost his footing and fell the rest of the way to the ground. He broke a leg and ended up back in the hospital.

## Bird Brains

At least 30 brown pelicans have crashed into sidewalks and roads in Arizona, according to the state game and fish department. Officials said that flocks of the endangered pelicans, which are experiencing a food shortage along the West Coast and have moved inland, mistake the shimmering of heat waves rising from paved surfaces for lakes and creeks. "They try to land on the water, but it's asphalt, and it's 'Bam! That doesn't feel so good,'" said Sandy Cate, director of the department's wildlife center at Adobe Mountain in north Phoenix.

## Girth of a Nation

Stanley Mordarsky, 55, fell to his death from a roller coaster at Six Flags New England because his pot belly kept the ride's lap bar from engaging properly to restrain him, according to Massachusetts officials. Mordarsky was 5 feet 2 inches tall and weighed about 230 pounds. Six Flags said that because of the accident, it will bar super-sized patrons from the ride.

## Don't Ask, Don't Tell

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced a new rule that prevents men from making anonymous donations

to sperm banks if they have had homosexual sex within the past five years.

## Pyrotechnics Follies

Fans were forced to leave an indoor football game in Corpus Christi, Texas, after a pre-game fireworks show went awry and filled the coliseum with smoke. Emergency crews administered oxygen to several players and some fans with asthma, and at least two fans were carried out on stretchers to be treated for respiratory problems. The game was delayed 45 minutes.

## Bring Back Hammers

Carpenter Raymond L. Tassinari, 22, died while using an air-powered nail gun at a job site in Plymouth, Mass., when one of the nails misfired and pierced his heart.

Construction worker Isidro Mejia, 39, stumbled on scaffolding at a job site in Los Angeles County, Calif., and fell onto a co-worker who was using a nail gun. The gun discharged, firing six nails into Mejia's head. Doctors at Providence Holy Cross Medical Center removed the nails, including three that were embedded in his brain, and predicted a gradual recovery but noted that the patient had lost most of his English-speaking skills when one of the nails entered his frontal lobe.

## Larcenous Animals

Police in Fairfax County, Va., said that after Ruth Breiner, 75, reported a series of thefts of ceramic figurines from her yard, they set up a video surveillance system. The culprit turned out to be a black Labrador retriever. Officer Sophia Grinnan explained that the tape showed the unidentified dog scooping up the small items in its mouth and trotting off.

Bob and Alexis Saskowski tied a yellow ribbon to a tree in the yard of their home in Bettendorf, Iowa, to show support for their son and other troops in Iraq. For eight months, the ribbons kept disappearing. Blaming neighborhood youths, the Saskowskis replaced the ribbons each time. Their sympathetic neighbors put up their own yellow ribbons, but only the Saskowskis' ribbons kept disappearing. Finally, they set up a video camera. The culprit turned out to be a squirrel, which pushed the ribbon to the base of the tree, bit through it and ran off with it.





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# ASK RUBY

The purpose of "ask Ruby" is to give honest and accurate information regarding sex and sexual relationships and to promote mutual and consensual sexual practices. We believe strongly that censorship is a method of patriarchal control used to shut fiery, feisty folks down. This column is intended as a blow to barriers that keep people from experiencing good communication around sex.

## Sore subject

Dear Ruby,  
I've been getting cold sores since I was a kid. My current girlfriend refuses to let me go down on her anytime I have one. I told her that's ridiculous since cold sores are not STI's (Sexually Transmitted Infections). What can I tell her to make her relax about it?

*Sigh,  
Curiously Crusty*

Dear CC,  
As we all know, cold sores are commonplace. Little kids get them all the time. The reason? Because they are highly contagious. So you don't have to be sexin' to catch one. While most of us have heard that there is more than one herpes virus and that they are not both sexually transmissible, our inside sources at the Emma Goldman Clinic inform us that some current health practitioners are saying the difference between the virus strains is little to none. Hate to break it to you, but your girlfriend is right. Contrary to popular belief, cold sores are indeed a symptom of herpes infection and can be passed from mouth to genitals quite easily. You don't even have to have an open sore to pass the virus from one person to another.

If your main concern is getting your girlfriend to relax, then you could start by talking with her about the possibility of using oral-genital barriers. Three cheers for safer sex! If she's up for it you could be slappin' on the latex (or non-micro-waveable cling wrap) in no time. A good

lubricant and a sense of humor are your best assistants for this job.

And while we're on the subject of relaxing, I would like you to take a moment to do an internal check. It's great that you are searching for accurate information, but please be sensitive and not create pressure on your girlfriend to do something she is not comfortable doing. Anytime someone tells me that I should "just relax" when I have very clearly stated a boundary—such as "I don't want you to go down on me when you have a cold sore"—I generally start imagining the sound of my boots walkin' out the door to fling my frisky treasures elsewhere. If you want her to relax, then respect her boundaries about her body and her choices around her life. She deserves your respect. It's as simple as that.

Thanks for bringing this situation up, because being informed about STI's is super-duper important in negotiating sex play. And so is hearing and being respectful of boundaries. So purrrrrr, my kitten, you're doing a good job.

Love,  
Ruby

We do not claim to have all the answers, but we do have extended experience, both personal and professional. Questions should be mailed to Ruby's Pearl, 323 E. Market St., Iowa City, IA 52240, 319-248-0032 or emailed to [rubyspearl@excite.com](mailto:rubyspearl@excite.com).



# stars over iowa city

FORECAST FOR AUGUST 2004 • BY DR. STAR



**ARIES** - You will find the independence of others more than a little provocative. But if you express your anger, it will only provoke more vexing displays of independence. Be especially cautious when dealing with willful youngsters. Remember that your goal is to re-establish order and stability. Also, remember that things just aren't going to fit back into the old mold. You will find yourself better able to channel impetuous energies in positive and harmonious ways later in the month. Others are needing to make necessary changes in their lives.



**TAURUS** - The planets are treating you with kid gloves, pushing you and empowering you to make long needed adjustments in basic areas, including financial and living arrangements. You will have to use financial resources to leverage these overdue changes. Remain calm and confident throughout. You could be called on to mediate as conflicts between friends and associates heat up. It might also seem that events will just roll on over you, but you are with the team that will ultimately win. Though you speak from the background, your influence is considerable.



**GEMINI** - Inaction is not an option. Financial considerations partly enable and partly force you to take action despite the obvious difficulties and risks. Do not depend on luck this time out. You must be mindful of practicalities, but you cannot ignore the hopes and dreams of others, either. Lead others down that narrow path between what is wanted and what is possible. The situation is highly volatile and could easily lead to hostilities. Careful attention to the rules of etiquette and diplomacy will help you through many a tight spot.



**CANCER** - Rapidly unfolding events, continuing pressures and confusing prospects will affect your financial interests. However, your overall circumstances remain quite viable. Tensions will grow as associates strive to adapt to changing political and economic circumstances. You will play a key role in setting the tone and direction of events in your immediate sphere. Your intuition is sharp and others ignore your guidance at their own risk. Try to moderate as others strike out in unhelpful directions and tempers flare. Much that is disturbing and disruptive to others will affect you harmoniously.



**LEO** - You and many of your key associates are waiting for some insight into the future to help them make a whole, heaping handful of important life decisions. Unfortunately, your associates are quite inclined to overreact in perfectly maddening ways. Your role will be to exercise a calming, steadying hand so that when that big opportunity comes, they will be better able to act on it effectively. You must also function as peacemaker and peacekeeper since tensions are bound to rise as August progresses. Intense discussions will lead to deeper understanding.



**VIRGO** - I guess you didn't need another shoot-out with key associates over almost completely non-negotiable issues. Or how about dealing with another bunch whose ideas for change are so completely extreme that nobody could possibly live with them? You will, in the end, find it easy to compromise where you must and accommodate demands where you have to. Also, your influence is so pervasive right now that nobody can really force your hand or make you accept something you don't want. Holding your temper might be the hardest part.



**LIBRA** - Librans will experience a wonderful combination of confidence, luck

and—especially toward month's end—wide-ranging influence. Don't be too set on getting exactly what you want—allow the planets a little leeway. Don't be impatient with limitations, because they are working in your favor. Although you might not realize that, now. Do watch your temper, which should be quite easy for Librans. And mind the budget. The big catch is you might have to use all of your impressive planetary support to avert a meltdown among your far-flung associates.



**SCORPIO** - You must divide your efforts between neighborhood and domestic concerns and affairs at a distance. You are not in a position to ignore or abandon one circumstance in favor of the other. Your personal happiness and security depend absolutely on bringing harmony and stability to both situations. Use your personal faith to strengthen your ties in both places. Infuse social interactions with the fortitude you derive from personal beliefs. Use this personal courage to build confidence and loyalty. In time, you will gain what you need to achieve in harmony and stability.



**SAGITTARIUS** - Sagittarians must blaze a new trail and steadfastly avoid the path of least resistance. Don't rest on your laurels or escape into distracting and pleasant but empty flirtations. Try not to blow off too much steam in response to important challenges or frustrating obstacles. I grant you that, as yet, there is no clearly defined goal, let alone, a clear path toward that goal. But there is a great opportunity out there and powerful motivation. Work through each question slowly and carefully. Something good will emerge. Patience is the key.



**CAPRICORN** - Capricorns can't be limited emotionally by events going on around them right now. Dissension and open conflict proliferate in your environment. Local concerns conflict with long distance interests. Partners and associates continue to weigh you down with unsatisfying obligations. But the fact is you are managing to be quite effective in key financial areas. Professional involvements are proving very productive. You can't rightly ignore what's going on around you, but things might go best if you sidestepped conflict and worry for some relaxation and recreation, even a little adventure.



**AQUARIUS** - Things will continue to shape up and opposition will continue to lessen. However, to keep momentum, you must periodically adjust your goals. Most important, for now, are small changes to daily habits and routines. These will someday add up to major, positive changes in your personal life and in your standing in the world. You are also deeply, deeply absorbed in reassessing and renegotiating the terms of a very close partnership. You need to better understand how to balance your need for independence with your involvement in this partnership.



**PISCES** - Dreams, ideals, ambitions and lots of unknowns will keep the outlines of your life shifting. As a result, personal, professional and financial arrangements will remain in flux. This will give you the time needed to set and reset patterns before they harden into structures. That's good, since the inspiration about future possibilities will keep on coming. The big picture will be all the better when it finally emerges. All this could unsettle close partners and associates, who are already antsy, not to mention testy. Be that as it may.

Contact Dr. Star at [chiron@mchsi.com](mailto:chiron@mchsi.com).

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Sat., Aug. 14, 7 pm - TOM NOTHNAGLE'S  
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Wed., Aug. 18, 7 pm - ANNE HEATON &  
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Thurs., Aug. 19, 5 - 9 pm - Potluck Dinner and Jam

Sat., Aug. 21, 7 pm - THE LOST TOYS

Thurs., Aug. 26, 7 pm - CHRIS SHAFFER

Sat., Aug. 28, 7 pm - BREE CLIME-WHITE

Thurs., Sept. 2, 7 pm - NIK STRAIT

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- 7) Aug. DJ Alert
- 11) Aug. Rapidier Than Horsepower, Mae Shi
- 14) Aug. Kita, Bottom Feeder
- 16) Aug. High On Fire, Bongzilla
- 18) Aug. Haste The Day
- 21) Aug. Marah Mar, Twelve Canons
- 22) Aug. Glasseater, Throw Down, Calico System
- 23) Aug. The Vets
- 26) Aug. Paul Cary, Joe Buck  
(Legendary Shack Shakers)
- 27) Aug. Troubled Hubble CD Release show
- 28) Aug. Bad Fathers, Autodramatics

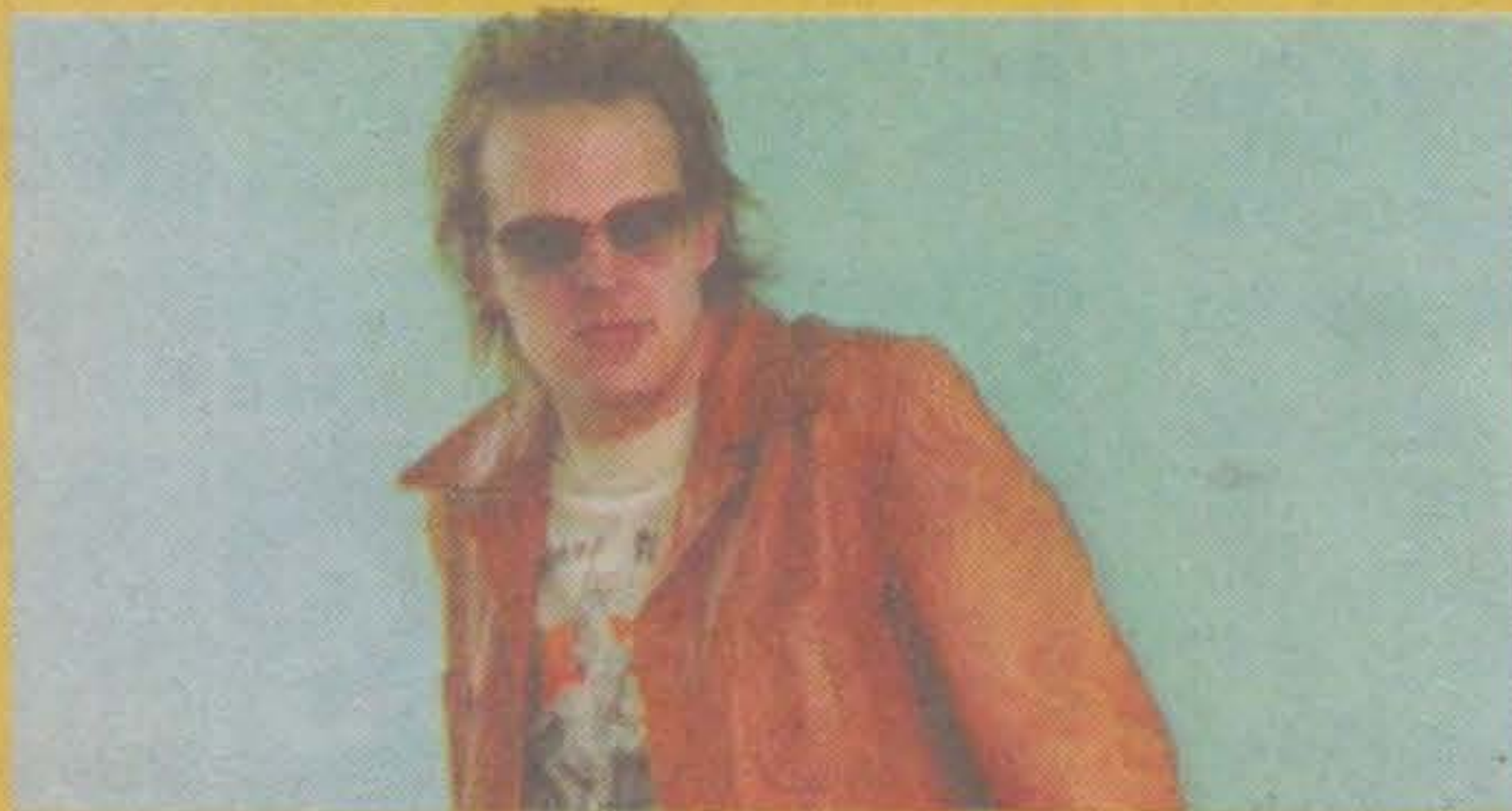
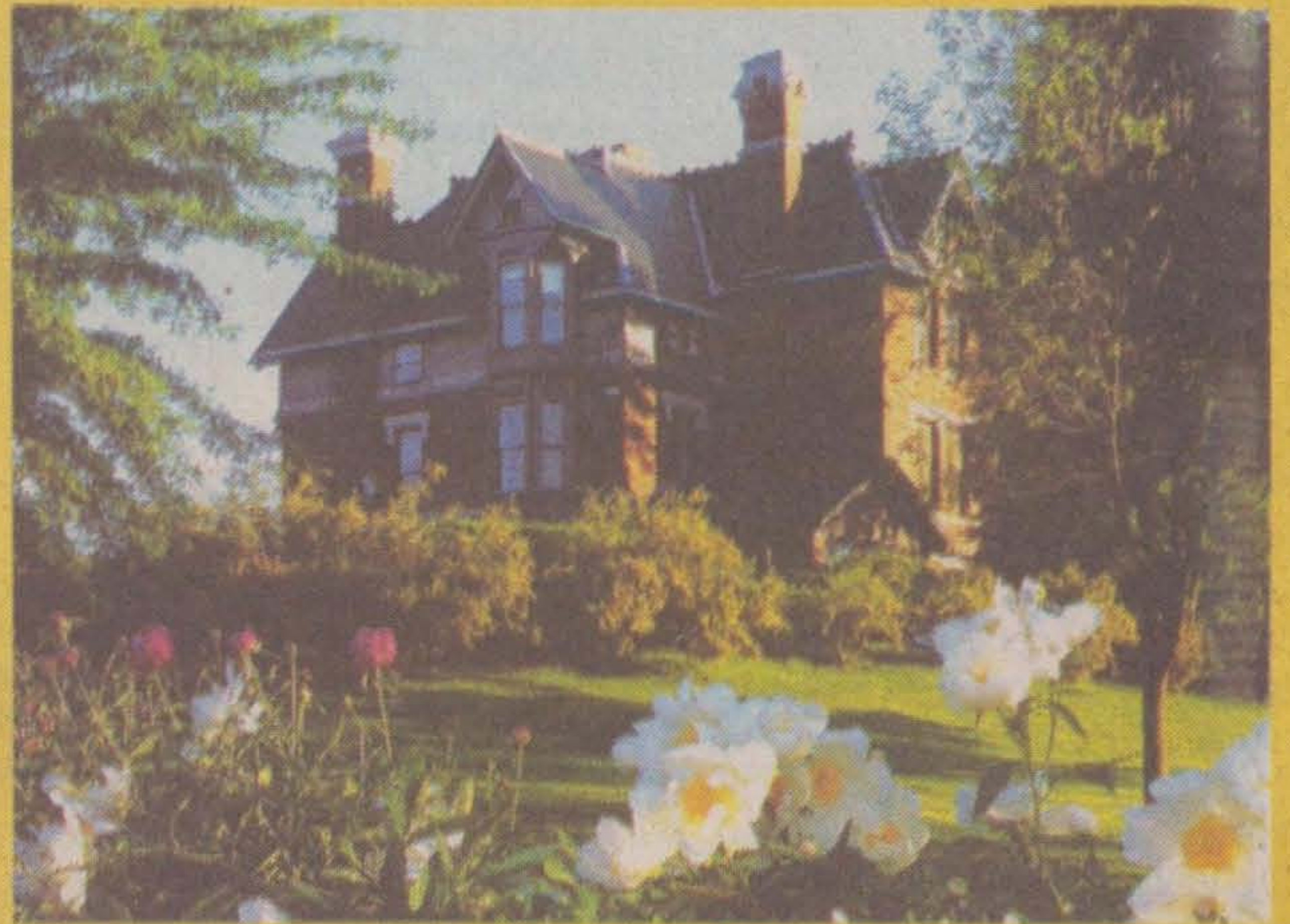
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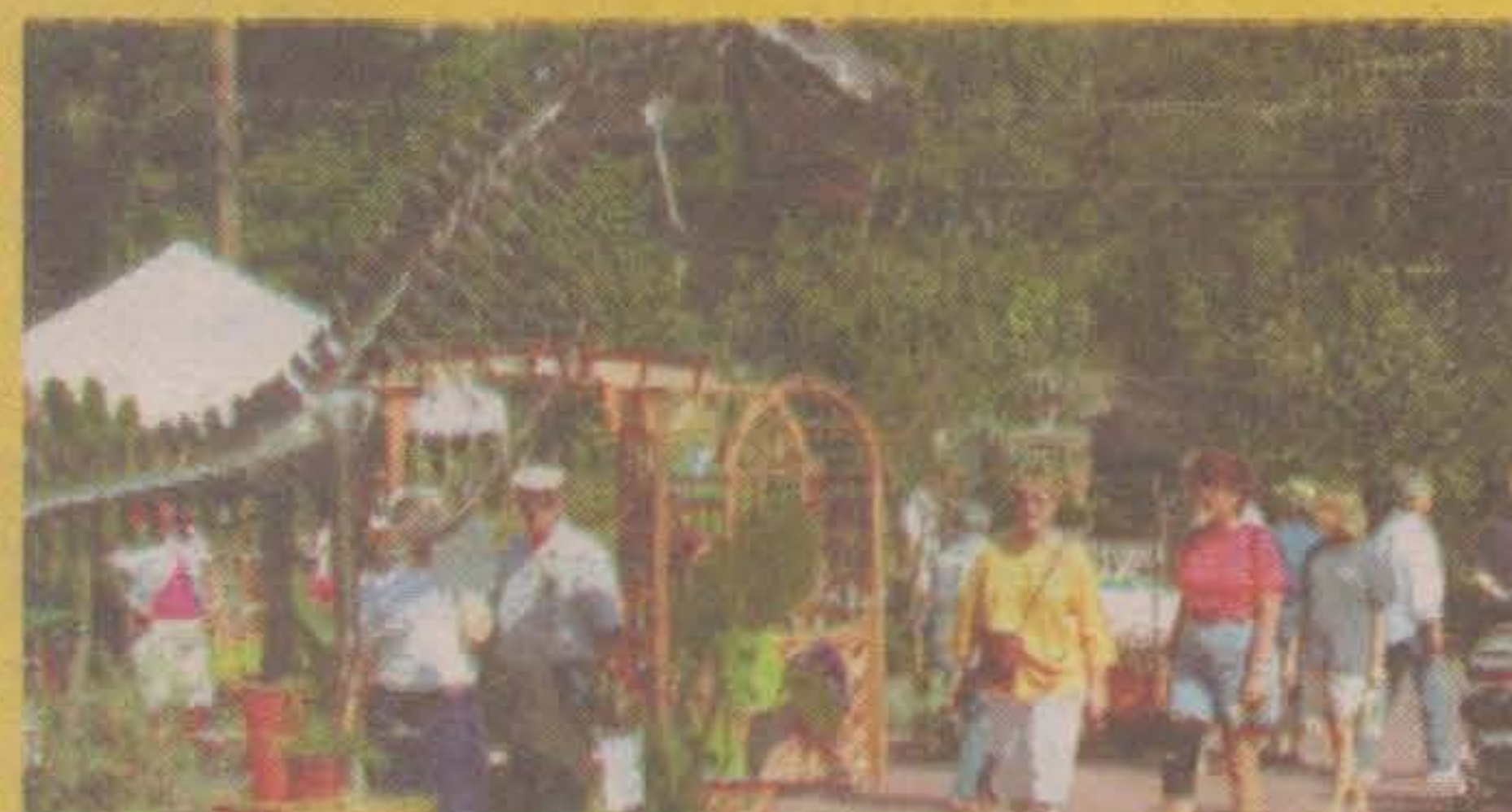
August 7

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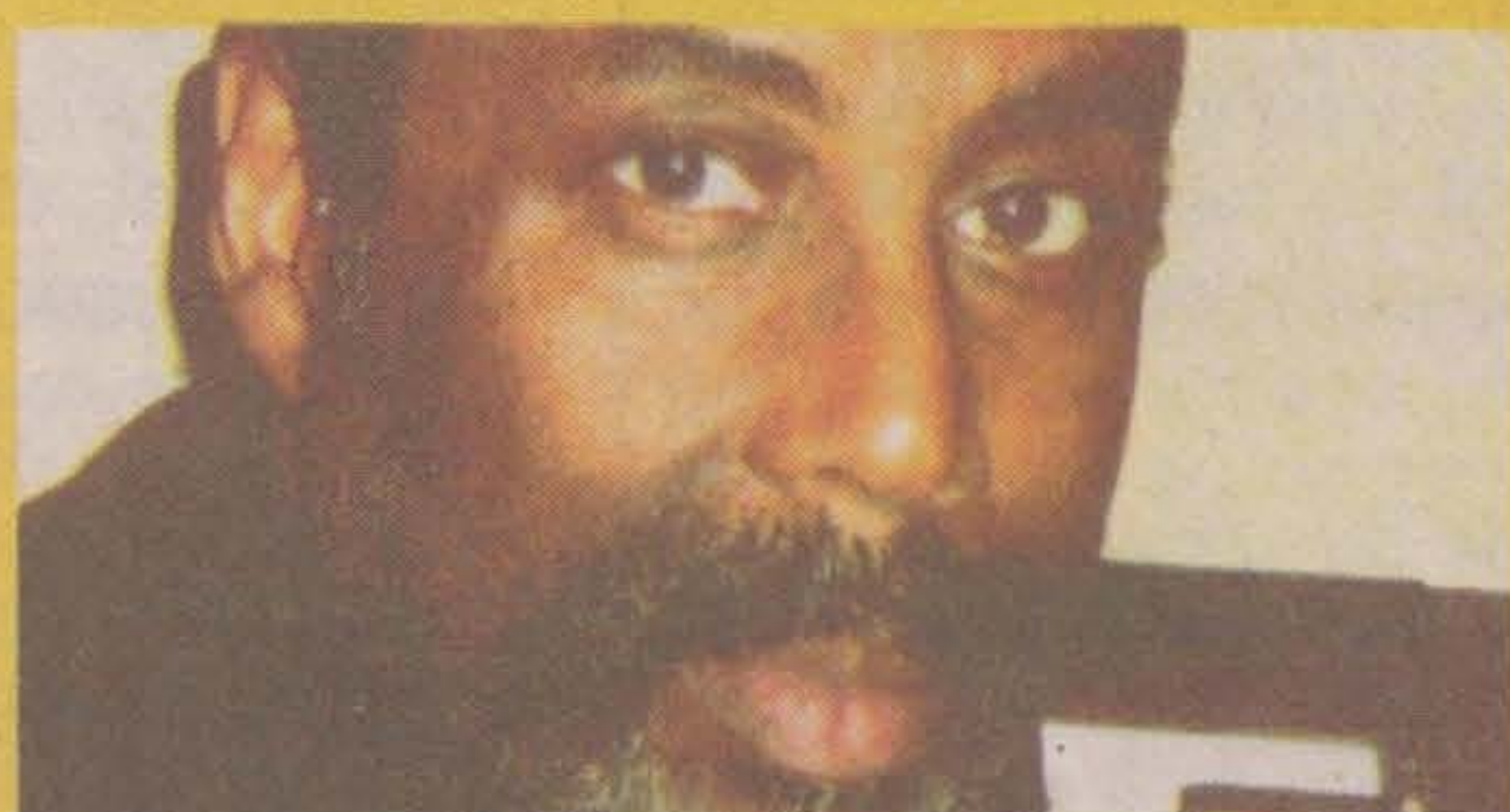
August 13-15

**Cabaret in the Courtyard - Janelle Lauer**  
Janelle Lauer is smooth and rough,  
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August 28

**The Eastern Iowa Garden & Landscape Show**  
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